

THE
HISTORY
OF
AGATHON,

By Mr. C. M. WIELAND.

Translated from the GERMAN Original,

WITH

A PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

— Quid Virtus & quid Sapientia possit
Utile proposuit nobis exemplar —

V O L. IV.



L O N D O N,
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C O N T E N T S

O F

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

B O O K X.

- CHAP. I. *Of the Drama. Conduct of Agathon at the Court of Dionysius.* 1
- CHAP. II. *Instances, that every thing which glitters is not Gold.* — 32
- CHAP. III. *Great Offenses against the State committed by Agathon.—Consequences of them.* — — 63
- CHAP. IV. *Information to the Reader.* 110
- CHAP. V. *Moral Situation of our Hero.* 115

B O O K XI.

- CHAP. I. *Apology for the Greek Author.* 149
- CHAP. II. *The People of Tarentum. Character of an amiable old Man.* 160
- CHAP. III. *An unexpected Discovery.* 178
- CHAP. IV. *Something, which without a Spirit of Divination, may be foreseen.* 201
- CHAP. V. *A Farewell.* — 233

ERRATA.

Page 68. Line 2. they, *read* it

— 75. — 18. part, *read* post

— 91. — 22. entirely gave, *read* entirely frustrated, gave

— 125. — 8. close, *read* closely

— 126. — 8. entirely, *read* totally

— 156. — 1. thing, *read* thinking

— 169. — 14. *dele* to.

— 196. — 10. near, *read* nearly



AGATHON.

BOOK X.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Drama.

Conduct of Agathon at the Court of Dionysius.

IT is an objection made against
I Shakespear—who of all poets,
since Homer, knew mankind
the best from the king to the beggar,
and from Julius Cæsar to Jack Falstaff;
and who saw through their characters by
a wonderful kind of intuition—It is I
say an objection made against him that
his pieces have not any, or at least a very
Vol. IV. B faulty

faulty, irregular, and ill-concerted plan, that comic and tragic incidents are thrown together promiscuously in the most unaccountable manner, and frequently the very person, who by the pathetic language of nature has drawn tears into our eyes, shall a few moments after, by some strange conceit, or extraordinary expression of his feelings, throw us, if not into a fit of laughter, yet into such a state of indifference, that it is very difficult for him afterwards to revive in us that sympathy with which he wishes to inspire us.—This is the general objection,—and those who make it never once reflect, that even in this respect his pieces are natural pictures of human life. The life of most men, and (if we might venture to say it) the course of action in great states, considering them as moral agents, resembles the old gothic drama in so many respects, that one would be induced to believe the authors of those pieces were more intelligent than is commonly

monly imagined, and where they had no particular design of setting human life in a light of ridicule, have taken as much trouble to paint nature truly, as the Greeks did to embellish her. Not to mention an accidental conformity, that in these pieces, as in real life, the most important parts are frequently played by the very lowest actors—what can tally more exactly than both are used to do with each other, in the business, distribution and disposition of the scenes, in the intricacies and catastrophe of the plot? How seldom do the authors of the one or the other ask themselves, why they have made this or that precisely so, and no otherwise? How often do they surprise us with events, for which we are not in the least prepared? How often do we see persons coming in and going out, without being able to comprehend for what purpose they appear, or for what reason they disappear? How much in both is left to chance? How often do we

see the greatest effects produced by the most trivial causes? How frequently are points of weight and moment treated with a gay and careless air, and the most insignificant matters canvassed with a ridiculous solemnity? And when every thing is so lamentably perplexed and jumbled together, that we begin to despair of the possibility of a conclusion, how happily do we see either by some Deity popping out of a paper-cloud in the midst of thunder and lightning, or by some other bold stroke, every difficulty, not unravelled indeed, but cut through at once; which so far answers the same end, that one way or other the piece is brought to a conclusion, and the spectators may clap or hiss as they please, or—as they dare. Besides, every one knows, what an important figure the noble † *Hans-Wurst* makes in the tragi-comedies we are speaking of, who seems resolved to maintain himself upon the theatre

† Jack Pudding.

atre in the capital of the German empire, probably, as an eternal monument of the taste of our ancestors! Would to God his character was entirely confined to the theatre! But how many principle scenes, in all times, have we not seen conducted on the stage of the world with—or what is yet worse, by—a *Hans-Wurst*? How often have the greatest men, born to be the supporters of a throne, the benefactors of whole nations and ages, been reduced to see their wisdom and courage baffled by a low ridiculous joke of a *Hans-Wurst*, or persons of the same stamp, who without assuming his doublet and yellow hose, make no scruple of assuming his character? How often do the embarrassments themselves in each species of tragi-comedy arise merely from some blunder or roguery of *Hans-Wurst*, which defeats the schemes of sensible people before they can be aware of it?—*Manum de tabulá!*— But if this comparison be founded, as we apprehend it is, how must we pity a

wise and upright man whose fate hath destined him to be involved in the administration of public affairs under a wicked or—which is worse?—a weak Prince? Of what advantage is it to him, that he hath abilities and resolution, that he acts on the soundest principles, and the strictest plan of justice, when the most contemptible insect, when a slave, a pimp, a *Bacchidion*, or something still more worthless, some parasite, whose whole merit consists in cunning, dissimulation and malice, have it in their power to disconcert, retard, perhaps totally to destroy his measures? While he, having once ventured upon so hazardous an undertaking, as that for instance, in which *Agathon* is at present engaged, hath no other means remaining to satisfy his own conscience, and to justify his conduct in all events before the impartial tribunal of wise men, and posterity—but that of laying down to himself a regular plan for his direction in every point, before he
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puts his hand to the business. Though, perhaps, all the precaution which can be derived from such a plan, may not be sufficient to ascertain the event: yet he will have the consolation of having taken such steps as must inevitably have secured success to his measures, had it not been for accidental circumstances, which it was not possible for him either to foresee or prevent.

THIS was in fact our hero's first care, after he had engaged to assume the character of a counsellor and confidant to King *Dionysius*. He saw all, or at least a great part of the difficulties in forming such a plan as might serve for a clue to conduct him through the labyrinth of a court and of public life. But he was of opinion, that the most defective plan is better than none at all; and it was his custom, whatever subject employed his thoughts, to draw his ideas into a system so naturally disposed, that they formed of themselves as it were, a plan which usually had

no other fault than what arose from the temper of *Agathon*, who could not think so ill of mankind, as those with whom he was concerned deserved. Yet he had no longer that sublime notion of human nature that he formerly entertained, or to speak more accurately, he was acquainted with the infinite distance between metaphysical man, such as is dreamed of in a solitary life of speculation; natural man, in the rude state of simplicity and innocence, as he comes out of the hands of the universal mother of Beings; and artificial man, to whom society, its laws, customs and manners, his wants, his dependance, the perpetual contest between his desires and his inability, his own rights, and the right of others, the consequent necessity of dissembling, and perpetually concealing his real views, and a thousand similar physical and moral causes contribute to give an unaccountable deceitful form.—He knew, I say, after all the experience he had already had, this difference

rence of men from what they might be, and probably from what they should be, too well to found his plan upon platonic ideas. He was no longer that juvenile enthusiast, who thought it as easy to carry a great design into execution, as to conceive it. The Athenians had cured him for ever, of the prejudice, that virtue stood in need of no assistance to conquer her enemies. He had learnt how little a man can expect from others, how little he can depend upon them, and what was of most importance to him, how little confidence he ought to repose in himself. He had learnt how much one must give way to circumstances; that a plan in itself the most perfect in certain situations is frequently the worst; that ill cannot be changed at once into good; that in the moral as in the material world, nothing proceeds in a strait line, and that one can seldom come to a good end, without many turnings and windings:—In fine, that life, espe-

cially that of a profest statesman, resembles a voyage where the pilot is obliged to steer according to wind and weather; where he is not safe one instant from being stopt or driven out of his course by opposite currents; and where, after a thousand forced deviations from the line, he had traced out to himself on the chart, he arrives at last at the destined port, as soon and in as good condition as possible.

Agreeably to these general principles, he settled his views in every thing he undertook; the degree of virtue he proposed to attain, and his conduct towards those who should be most instrumental in impeding, or promoting his designs,—the former he regulated by taking together all the circumstances of the case he had before him—the latter he adjusted conformably to the nature of the persons he had to deal with, or to speak with more propriety, according to the idea he form-

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ed to himself of their characters, which was not absolutely infallible.

SINCE he had an opportunity of a nearer acquaintance with *Dionysius*, he could no longer expect to make him the pattern of a good Prince; but still he hoped, and not without reason, to be able to take off the pernicious influence of his crimes, and to avail himself of his good dispositions or rather of his good humour, and even of his passions and infirmities for the advancement of the public good. The opinion he entertained of this Prince was in fact so moderate, that he could not find it deeper, without giving up all hopes of succeeding in his designs; and yet the event shewed, that he had even judged too favourably of them. *Dionysius* had qualities indeed of a very promising aspect; but unfortunately he had joined to each of these, another, which contradicted all the former had promised; and upon a close and deliberate examination of his character, it ap-

peared that his seeming virtues were in reality no other than his vices, which seen in a certain light assumed the cast and complexion of virtue. Nevertheless *Agathon* suffered himself in the mean time to be so dazzled by these specious appearances, that he never perceived the impossibility of amending such a character, and the vanity of all his hopes, till the discovery could no longer be of any use to him.

THE Prince's greatest weakness, in his opinion, was an immoderate propensity to ease and pleasure. The first he proposed to counteract, by endeavouring to make business as light and as agreeable to him as possible; the last, by weaning him gradually from those wild follies, the impetuosity of which he had never yet resisted. Our amusements become more refined, more elevated, and more moral, the greater share the Muses have in them. Upon this acknowledged principle he took pains to instill into *Dionysius* a bet-
ter

ter taste for the fine arts, than he had hitherto had. In a short time his palaces, country-seats and gardens, were filled with the choicest productions of the best Grecian Artists in painting and sculpture. *Agathon* brought the most eminent virtuosi in every branch from *Athens* to *Syracuse*; he built a magnificent Odeum upon the plan of that, for which *Pericles* had expended the public treasure of the Greeks; and *Dionysius* found so much amusement in the various species of exhibitions, with which he was almost daily entertained at the Theatre, under the direction of his favourite, that he seemed, according to custom, for a long time to have lost all taste for other diversions. Yet there was another attachment still remaining, whose influence over him was alone sufficient to defeat all the virtuous projects of his newly adopted friend. The dancing girl *Bacchidion*, was the present object of this attachment; but it was already apparent, that the immoderate

rate

rate passion, to which she owed her influence, had abated very much of its original violence. It would not probably have been difficult to anticipate the effects of his natural inconstancy a few weeks; but *Agathon* had reasons, which appeared to him of weight sufficient to determine him against such a measure. The consort of *Dionysius* was in no respect calculated to support an attempt to restrain him within the limits of conjugal affection. The Prince could not live without amours; and the power his mistress obtained over his heart made his inconstancy dangerous. *Bacchidion* was one of those good-humoured frolicsome creatures, whose fancy paints every thing to them in the most delightful colours, and who have no other care, than to laugh away their time from one instant to another, without ever suffering themselves to be troubled with a single thought of ambition or avarice, or the least solicitude for the future. She loved pleasure above
all

all things ; ever ready to give as to receive it, it seemed to spring up wherever she trod ; it smiled in her eyes and breathed from her lips. Without intending to derive any importance to herself from the attachment of the Prince, she had already more than once, from a kind of mechanical inclination to see happy countenances, employed her power over his heart in doing services to persons who deserved them, as well as to others who did not, for she never made any inquiry about their merit. *Agathon* was apprehensive that her place might probably be filled by some other, who might be tempted to make a worse use of her charms. He held it, therefore, not unworthy his own character, to encourage rather than oppose the inclination of the Prince, in a proper manner, and without letting it appear, that he gave any particular attention to it. He afforded her opportunities of displaying her talents for amusing in a variety of ways, which

which gave her always the charm of novelty. He contrived by frequent little absences, to prevent the passion of *Dionysius* from being cloyed too soon with the pleasures he seemed to taste in the arms of this engaging creature. He even proceeded so far, on a particular occasion, when the rigid principles of *Plato* in this respect happened to be the subject of discourse, as to make no scruple of declaring, that it is an injustice to think of confining within the limits of strict moderation, the private amusements of a Prince, who makes a point of performing his great and essential duties with a becoming assiduity. Though his expressions were general, yet what he said seemed to imply a tacit approbation of the Prince's attachment to the fair *Bacchidion*, and this in fact was his design. We leave it to be determined, whether the goodness of his intention was sufficient to justify so dangerous an avowal: thus far is certain, that *Dionysius*, who till now, from a kind
of

of respect for the virtue of our Hero, had taken pains to conceal his failings from him, was henceforward under less restraint, and through an ill-grounded, perhaps, but a very general prejudice, that virtue must be a declared enemy to the sway of beauty, conceived a suspicion that our Hero, in respect of certain foibles, stood no higher than himself and other mortals—and though such an opinion was soon confuted by the regularity and consistency of *Agathon's* deportment, yet was the general impression never so thoroughly obliterated, but that the accusations framed by his enemies found from this time an easier access to the heart of a Prince, who was otherwise so much disposed to look upon virtue in the light either of folly or of imposition. In the mean time *Agathon*, by his complaisance to the favourite passion of *Dionysius*, prevailed so far as to inspire him with a greater inclination to attend to the affairs of government; and we, on our part, may
for-

forgive him, if he considered the many good effects which resulted from this facility, as a sufficient reparation for the obloquy it brought upon him from certain rigid moralists, who in their retirement from the world condemn at their leisure the conduct of others, though they themselves in their situation would most probably have acted in a more exceptionable manner.

BESIDE the fair *Bacchidion* whose sole ambition, as we have seen, was to render the Prince, whom she loved, perfectly happy—there was another favourite, who by his influence with *Dionysius*, was the most considerable of all those with whom *Agathon* had any concerns in his new department. This person, whose name was *Philistus*, took a part in this period of our history, which may make it an object of importance to the reader to be better acquainted with his character. Besides this, it is one of the inviolable duties of history, to strip off that
false

false splendor, with which fortune and the favour of the great too often clothes the most worthless beings ; to inform posterity, that *Pallas*, for example, that same *Pallas*, whom so many decrees of the Roman senate, so many statues and public paintings even in after ages announce as one of the great benefactors of mankind, as a Demi-God, was nothing better nor greater than an infamous abandoned slave. Although *Philistus* may appear in comparison with a *Pallas* or a *Tigellinus*, not more than a Dwarf to a Giant, yet this in fact proceeds only from the immense difference between the Roman Empire at its highest point of grandeur, and that petty state which was subject to the dominion of *Dionysius*. Even that Fiend, who to vent his malice drowned a herd of swine, would with infinitely greater satisfaction have laid the whole universe under water, had it been in his power ; and *Philistus* would have been a *Pallas*, had he had the good fortune to have

have been brought up in the anti-chamber of a *Claudius*. The proofs he gave in his small sphere of what he might have done in a larger, leave us no room to doubt of the truth of this assertion. A slave by birth, and afterwards one of the freed-men of the elder *Dionysius*, he distinguished himself early among his comrades, by an extraordinary craftiness of genius, united to the most supple disposition; yet these accomplishments did not procure him the advantage of any particular favour or preference with his master. *Philistus*, finding fortune not in a humour to assist him, though this is no uncommon case, was disturbed at it, and with reason; but he knew how to assist himself. Others, who had gone before him with better success, had taught him the way to advance himself without trouble and without merit to those dignities, for which a species of ambition, such as in certain minds is perfectly compatible with the most abject meanness, had
given

given him an irresistible desire. We have already observed, that the younger *Dionysius* was kept in unusual restraint by his father. *Philistus* was the only person, who had penetration enough to discover, what use might be made of this circumstance. He found means to make the young Prince's nights pass more agreeably than his days. Was there occasion for him to do more, in order to be considered as a benefactor, whose services could never sufficiently be rewarded? *Philistus* did not stop here; he fell upon an expedient to render himself, by means only of a slight manœuvre, at once a more worthy, and a more immediate object of this reward. An unlucky cholic, which he had the art of administering, shortened the days of the old tyrant; *Philistus* was the first to bring the joyful tidings to his young master; and now he beheld himself at once in the most secret confidence of a king, and soon after at the helm of the state. These little anecdotes

dotes are sufficient to give us so clear an idea of the moral character of this upright minister, that we should not wonder, if he were now to commit crimes of the most flagitious cast, that human nature is capable of. But what a physiognomist must he have been, who could read these anecdotes in his eyes? It is true, that *Agathon*, from the beginning, did not conceive a very favourable opinion of him, but how, without receiving any particular information, or being himself a *Philistus*, was it possible for him to suspect, that *Philistus* could be what he really was. Few people knew the inside of this man; and those few were too good courtiers to betray their former patron, till his disgrace was certain, and till they saw what they were to get by it; even *Aristippus*, who in all probability was no stranger to his true character, had determined to act the part of a mere spectator. Another circumstance, which might contribute also to mislead *Agathon*,
was,

was, that *Philistus* employed every means which the art of dissimulation could supply, to acquire his esteem. With all that knowledge of mankind, which he, according to the usual, though very fallacious notion of courtiers, thought himself possessed of, he had, to his great disappointment, never been able to discover the weak side of our Hero. He had, therefore, no other means left but to recommend himself to the new favourite, as an useful man, by great industry and punctuality in business; and as a man of integrity, by virtues, which, whenever he had occasion for them, he could assume with as much ease, as one can slip on a masquerade habit. To these qualifications, which *Agathon* thought he perceived in him, were added the favour he was in with *Dionysius*, and the consideration, that it would be less safe for the state to dismiss an ambitious minister, than to keep him under strict limitations, with all apparent respect to his dignity:

dignity: and thus it happened, that those who had looked upon the disgrace of *Philistus* as a natural consequence of the promotion of *Agathon*, found themselves mistaken in their opinion. His credit seemed rather to increase, for he was appointed president of all the different courts of justice, and *Agathon*, with due restrictions and subordination shared under him that power, the sole and absolute possession of which had formerly been invested in the confidant of the Prince. But in fact, by these means it became next to an impossibility for him to be guilty of misdemeanors, if at any time he should happen to be under a temptation of committing them; while there were so many eyes upon every part of his administration, while he was obliged to render an account of his whole conduct, and was not at liberty to take any step without the approbation of the Prince, or, which for some time was the same thing, of his representative.

WE might here without doubt report many fine things of *Agathon's* administration, if we were disposed to expatiate on every useful ordinance and regulation, which he either actually had, or would, if time had permitted him, have carried into execution, in respect to political œconomy, the collection and application of the public revenue, police, agriculture and commerce, and, what in his opinion was one of the most essential objects, the manners of the people, and the cultivation of virtue. But such a detail is not consistent with the plan of the present work, and would in fact argue an ignorance of the effect it must produce in our days, in which the art of government seems to have taken a turn, that renders the system and example of our Hero as useless, as the projects of the good Abbé de *St. Pierre* of patriotic memory. The manner in which *Agathon* formerly employed his interest and authority at *Athens*, may give our readers a sufficient

Vol. IV. C

ficient idea how he would employ a regal revenue, and a power nearly absolute.

ONE circumstance, however, we must not omit, as it had a considerable influence on the subsequent adventures of our Hero. *Dionysius*, at the time when *Agathon* arrived at his court, was engaged in a war with the Carthaginians, who acting in concert with several small republics on the south and west sides of *Sicily*, under pretence of protecting them against the overgrown power of *Syracuse*, endeavoured to take advantage of the civil dissensions among the natives, as a favourable opportunity to bring under subjection to themselves an island, which from its situation was of the greatest importance to their commercial views. Some of these small republics were actually under the dominion of tyrants, as they were called; and these had thrown themselves already into the arms of the Carthaginians; the rest had still in some measure preserved their liberty, and hesitated between the
fear

AGATHON.

fear of being overpowered by *Dionysius*, and a mistrust of their pretended friends, in a state of suspense, which every moment seemed inclining to the side of the latter.

Timocrates, whom *Dionysius* had intrusted with the chief command in this war, had, by gaining some advantages over the enemy, already acquired, what is often purchased at a very easy rate, the reputation of a good general; but as he was more solicitous to employ this opportunity in gathering laurels and riches for himself, than in promoting the true interest of his master, he had rather encouraged than suppressed the interior commotions of the Sicilians, and by his conduct had made himself so odious to those, who had not embraced any party, that they were on the point of declaring for *Carthage*. Under these circumstances *Agathon* was of opinion, that his eloquence might be more serviceable to *Dionysius*, than all the land and sea-forces, though

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they

they were by no means inconsiderable, that *Timocrates* had under his command. He held it better to restore tranquillity to *Sicily*, than [to subdue it; to lead it into a kind of voluntary submission to *Syracuse*, than to suffer it to remain exposed to the risques and perilous consequences of a war, which, let the event be as fortunate as possible for *Dionysius*, could afford him no other advantage, but the equivocal one of adding to his subjects a multitude of reluctant and disaffected people, upon whose fidelity he could not depend for one single moment. *Dionysius* could not refuse his assent to the reasons upon which *Agathon* supported his design, and his hopes of success from it. Upon the whole, it was the same thing to him, by what means he obtained quiet possession of the sovereignty of *Sicily*, provided he did obtain it; and as he was mean enough to plume himself on the very indecisive, indeed, but for that reason more industriously magnified victories of his general,

general, as if they had been his own acquisitions ; so was he also cowardly enough to listen to the most inglorious terms of accommodation, whenever he reflected with any degree of attention upon the uncertainty of the fortune of war. Thus the nobler principles of our Hero gained an easy access with him, or to speak with more propriety, *Agathon* ascribed the favourable disposition he found him in to the impression made by his own reasoning, without perceiving that it was really founded in the pusillanimity of his heart. Upon this he repaired in private (for it was absolutely necessary that *Timocrates* should not have the least suspicion of his designs) to such cities as were on the point of joining the Carthaginians. Here he succeeded in removing the universal prejudice which prevailed against the dreadful tyranny of *Dionysius* ; he convinced them so entirely of this truth, that the interest of each particular part of *Sicily* is inseparable

from that of the whole; he drew so flattering a picture of the fortunate condition of the island, if all the members of it were united by the bands of mutual confidence and friendship to *Syracuse*, as to a common center; that he obtained more than he had hoped, and even more than he wished. He wanted only allies, but they in a fit of unbounded affection were on the point of yielding themselves, without any conditions, the subjects of a Prince, with whose minister they were so highly enchanted.

THE turn which public affairs took, from this circumstance, brought the war so quickly to an end, that *Timocrates* had no opportunity of acquiring glory by a decisive action, which, every thing considered, might have been as likely to terminate in a defeat as in a victory. It may easily be conceived, whether *Agathon* by such measures obtained the friendship of this man, whose great fortune and alliance with the Prince made him a person

person of consequence in the state, and with what eyes *Timocrates* would look upon the general applause and joyful acclamations of the people, which attended our Hero in his return to *Syracuse* (the marks of that high respect with which he was received by the Prince,) and the unlimited esteem he secured to himself by this peaceful conquest. Constrained, however, to suppress his discontent and hatred against so successful a rival, he waited only with so much the greater impatience for opportunities privately to work his ruin; and how was it possible he should want for opportunities in a court, and in the court of such a Prince?

C H A P. II.

*Instances, that every thing which glitters, is
not Gold.*

AGATHON, during an administration, which had not lasted quite two years, having now gained the utmost confidence of his Prince, and the general love of the nation over which he ruled, had raised himself to that eminent degree of reputation and apparent felicity, which undeservedly becomes an object of admiration to all inferior persons, and of envy to base and ill-disposed minds. We must however own, that that whimsical inexplicable power, which is called luck or chance, had not the least share in these advantages. The services he had rendered in so short a time to the Prince, as well as to the nation, the quieting of *Sicily*, the greatness of *Syracuse* established, the embellishment of this capital city, the reformation of her policy,

policy, the encouragement of arts and manufactures, and the universal attachment he procured to a government which was before detested,—all these things gave indisputable testimonies of the wisdom of his administration. These merits were placed in so strong a light by the disinterestedness and regularity of his conduct, that there was no possibility of throwing a false colouring over them. His secret enemies therefore, had scarce any hopes remaining of procuring his disgrace so soon as it was expedient for their private designs, without the uncertain assistance of some accidental circumstance, which yet they could not form any idea of.

THE secret enemies of *Agathon*!—Is it possible that a man whose conduct was so irreproachable, and whose benevolence was extended to all, could have enemies? Thus perhaps will some persons think, who seem occasionally to forget, that every wise man, must of necessity have all fools, every upright man all knaves, for

his avowed, or certainly always for his secret enemies. 'This is a truth well founded on the nature of things, and so well confirmed by uninterrupted experience, that we have much better reasons for asking, How was it possible that a man, who behaved so well, should have had no enemies? The man indeed whose constant endeavour was to make his Prince virtuous, or at least to make his foibles harmless, must inevitably draw upon himself the utmost hatred from those courtiers, who (as *Montesquieu* says of all the great) fear nothing so much, as virtue in their Prince, whose foibles, they consider as the most secure foundation of their hopes. They could not behold *Agathon* in any other light, than as an obstacle to all their views and enterprizes. He required for instance, that a man should have some merit, before he could pretend to any rewards; but they knew a readier and more convenient method; a method by which persons of no
worth

worth have at all times succeeded in courts, except under such governments as that of *Antoninus* and *Julianus*. Servile adulation, blind subserviency to the passions of our superiors, insensibility to all the emotions of conscience and humanity, deafness to the call of all duties, the hardy effrontery of arrogating to ourselves talents and merits we have never possessed, a ready willingness to commit every base action, which can contribute to our advancement,—these were methods by which *Agathon* had made it impossible for them to rise. They saw, that so long as this uncommon man maintained the post of favourite to *Dionysius*, there was no possibility of success for men of their stamp. They therefore detested him; and we may be assured, that there was a kind of conspiracy brooding in the minds of all these courtiers against him, nor was it even necessary that they should have a secret conference about it. But nothing of this was as yet evident. The mask,

which they thought proper to put on, sat so easy upon them, that *Agathon* himself was deceived by it; and behaved to *Philistus*, *Timocrates* and their creatures, just in the same manner, as if the esteem they testified for him, and the approbation they gave to all his measures, had been sincere. These honest men had a double advantage over him, for he, unsuspecting any evil from them, did not think of watching them closely:—while they, conscious of their own baseness, were the more cautious of concealing their true sentiments under an impenetrable disguise. Certain as they were, that every man must necessarily have a weak side, they took all the pains imaginable to find out his, and exposed him to all manner of trials, without his being able to cast any suspicion upon them from this conduct. But when they found him either indifferent to, or prepared against all the temptations they occasionally threw in his way, they had no other

other expedient left, 'till some favourable opportunity should offer, than to lull him by the magic illusions of subtle flattery, which he might the more easily mistake for friendship, as it had all the appearance of it; more especially, as he had a right to expect that every individual should be his friend, in a country where he had been serviceable to all. This scheme succeeded, and it must be owned, that they gained much upon him by it.

WE cannot however avoid confessing, whether it is to the prejudice of our Hero or not, that at the time when his fame was arrived to the highest pitch, when *Dionysius* loaded him with marks of unlimited favour, when he was looked upon by all *Sicily* as their guardian angel, and when he seemed to possess that rare, if not even unheard of happiness, in so splendid a situation, of having all admirers and friends, without one enemy,—yet the ladies in *Syracuse* were the only persons

persons who made it sufficiently apparent how little they were satisfied with his behaviour. With a figure such as his, endowed in so extraordinary a degree with every qualification necessary to fascinate the eyes and captivate the heart, it was very natural that he should attract the attention of the fair.

THE ladies of *Syracuse* had as good eyes as those of *Smyrna*,—they had hearts too—or, if they had no hearts, they had at least emotions which are frequently substituted for those of the heart; and even if they wanted these, yet had they vanity, and could not therefore behold with indifference the obstinate insensibility of a man, whom they considered as their enemy, because the conquest of him would seem to proclaim the conqueror as the most amiable of her sex. The favourite of a monarch, in the eyes of most ladies, is always an *Adonis*. How natural then was the desire of inspiring an *Adonis* with love, who was also the confident

dant of a king, and excepting the title, and a certain band wore round the head, was in reality himself the king? We must trust to the gallantry of the Sicilian beauties, that they neglected no advances which could leave even the shadow of a decent excuse for his coldness. And by what means indeed could he have been excused? It is true, that a man who is laden with the care of a whole city, has not quite so much leisure as a young gentleman, who has nothing else to do, but just to shew his face twice a day in the anti-chamber, and flutters the rest of his time from one beauty, and from one company to another. But, however occupied a man may be, yet he still sets some hours apart for himself, and for his pleasures; and though *Agathon* might make his office more troublesome to himself, than is usual in our times, since we have discovered the secret of doing the most important things with a certain levity unknown to our more weighty ancestors,

cestors,—the secret of doing them, perhaps not so well, but with infinitely more grace,—it must still be evident, that *Agathon* had such hours of retirement. The influence he had in the administration of the state, seemed to give him so little to do, his mind appeared so disengaged, and he shewed so much vivacity and good humour in company, and at the public diversions, where *Dionysius* would always have him about his person, that the singularity of his conduct could not possibly be attributed to his occupations. It was necessary therefore to think of some other hypothesis to explain it. At first, each lady suspected that some other was the secret cause of this; and as long as this suspicion lasted, one might observe with what jealous eyes the good ladies watched each other; and how often, in one moment, a discovery was thought to be made, which in the next was contradicted. At length it was found, that the ladies suspected each other wrongfully,
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and that *Agathon* was equally complaisant to all, but loved none. They had not the least suspicion of any absent fair one; for what could have induced him to keep the object of his love at a distance? Nothing was now left but to make such conjectures as could not any way reflect much honour upon our Hero; neither could they lessen the reasonable disgust which one must feel at so unnatural, and in every consideration so detestable a phenomenon.

OUR readers, who cannot have forgotten what *Agathon* was at *Smyrna*, will immediately have thoughts which could not possibly occur to the ladies of *Syracuse*:—they will perhaps imagine them to have been deficient in charms, capable of making a sufficient impression upon a heart, which after a *Danae* (what a picture does this single word represent!) would not easily find any thing worthy of exciting its emotions. But if the information we follow in this history is believed,

lieved, there was not the slightest foundation for a conjecture so little to the credit of these ladies. *Syracuse* had it's beauties, which as well as *Danae*, might have served for models to a *Polycletes*, and all these fair ones had other advantages which added to their beauty.—Some had wit, others tenderness, some had at least a good share of that noble effrontery, which seems to characterize a certain class among our modern females, and sometimes sooner gains its end, than the most perfect charms, which being concealed under the veil of modesty, seem to betray an injurious diffidence in those who possess them. This could not therefore be the reason,—Well! perhaps then he might have availed himself of the secrecy of *Socrates*, and have found in the silent embraces of some agreeable *Cypassis*, the surest method of appearing to the world a *Xenocrates*.—Neither was this the case—at least our informations say nothing about

bout it. Not to detain our readers therefore with fruitless conjectures, we will own, that the cause of this indifference in our Hero, was something so natural and simple, that as soon as we have discovered it, *Shah-Baham* himself will think, that he had expected, if not the very thing, at least something much like it.

THE merchant, whom *Agathon* accompanied to *Syracuse*, was one of those to whom he had before at *Athens* given the picture of his *Psyche*, in order that she might be searched for in all places with greater probability of success. Perhaps he now thought no more of this circumstance, till one day paying a visit to this friend of his, he by chance saw this picture in his closet. The sensations of *Agathon* at this instant, were not very different from those he would have experienced, if this had been *Psyche* herself. The ideas of his first love became so lively on this occasion, that, however
small

small his hopes were of ever seeing the original again, they confirmed him anew in the resolution of remaining true to her memory. The ladies of *Syracuse* had therefore in reality a rival, though they could not guess that those tender sighs, which either of them would have wished to draw from his breast, were poured forth in midnight hours before a pictured mistress.

AMONG all those who were piqued at the insensibility of our Hero, none of them could dispute the preference with the fair *Cleonissa*, in regard to all the perfections which nature and art can unite in one lady. A perfect regular beauty, be it said under favour of all such as may be interested in preferring the Graces to their Queen, is, among all the qualifications a lady can possess, that which makes the quickest, strongest, and most universal impression. In women of virtue it has still this farther advantage, that at the same time it repels the desires we may have

have of being beloved by the possessor of so uncommon an advantage, by a kind of mechanical respect, which the most daring Satyr is scarce able to overcome.

Cleonissa possessed this perfection in so high a degree, that connoisseurs who could behold beauty with the greatest coolness and indifference, could not find any fault with her ; it was impossible to see her without admiration. But the uncommon reserve she affected, the majestic turn she knew how to give to her countenance, her looks and all her motions, joined to the reputation of strict virtue she had acquired by this, strengthened the natural effect of her beauty so much, that no one had been bold enough to expose himself to the hazard of becoming the *Ixion* to this *Juno*. The mediocrity of her birth, and the situation as well as the prudence of a jealous husband, had kept her during her earliest infancy at so great a distance from the world,

world, that she was quite a new phænonon, when *Philistus*, who had discovered her we know not how, and had found out some convenient method of making her a widow, introduced her in quality of his lady to the court of the Princesses, under which appellation the mother, queen, and sister of *Dionysius* are included. *Philistus*, not more disposed than his predecessor, to share the possession of a woman endowed with such extraordinary merits, with another, even had it been *Jupiter* himself, took at first as much precaution, as the avaritious keeper of a precious treasure can possibly imagine, to preserve her from the most artful snares. But the virtue of the lady, and the ruling passion *Dionysius* in the first years of his reign had discovered for beauties not so difficult of access, joined perhaps to a certain coldness, which usually after two or three years are elapsed, oftentimes much earlier, steals imperceptibly upon those who have such wonderful

derful beauties at their disposal, had so lulled his suspicion, that he afterwards made no scruple of permitting her to be in company with the Princesses, as often they desired it.

WE will not examine whether *Cleonissa* was then really so virtuous, as the haughtiness of her behaviour to the men, and the rigid principles by which she judged others of her own sex, made her appear. Let it suffice that the Princesses, and what is more, her husband were perfectly convinced of it, and that none of the courtiers had as yet ventured to put so respectable a virtue to the proof. During the time that *Plato* was in so great repute with *Dionysius*, *Cleonissa* was one of his most zealous disciples, and one who had learnt to converse in the sublime language of his philosophy with the greatest fluency. Whether this arose from a desire of elevating herself above the rest of her sex, as much by her understanding as by her figure, (a pretty common foible with

with those who are properly called beauties) or from some other more laudable motive; yet it is certain, that she sought with so much eagerness every opportunity of hearing the godlike *Plato*, that she shewed so high a regard for his person, so implicit a faith in his notions of beauty and love, and all the other parts of his system; and in a short time became in body and soul so complete a Platonist, that this philosopher proud of such a disciple, enhanced the general opinion of this philosophy by the particular advantages he procured to her. It is true, he might on certain occasions have observed something in her beauteous eyes, which without a long train of reasoning might have made him conjecture that it would not have been impossible to humanize this Goddess. But the good *Plato* was then more than sixty years of age, and no longer made such observations. *Cleonissa* therefore kept up the reputation of being a living instance of this
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Platonic maxim, that external beauty is the reflection of the intellectual beauty of the soul. The prejudice in favour of her virtue, counterbalanced the impression her charms might have made; and she had the satisfaction to ascribe the perfect indifference with which she was beheld by *Dionysius*, to the prudence of her conduct: by this means she gained an additional merit with the Princesses.

BUT—O! with what propriety may we apply, even to the virtue of heroines, that sentiment of *Solon*, that no man can be esteemed happy before his death! *Cleonissa* saw *Agathon*—and from that moment—ceased to be *Cleonissa*.—No, not exactly so; though the expression answers to the common Platonic language; but she shewed, that the Princesses, herself, her husband, the court, and the whole world, including the divine *Plato* himself, had been much mistaken, in considering her as different from what she really was;

and as she must have appeared to be at first sight to every unprejudiced spectator; for instance, to an *Aristippus*.

To be astonished at so natural an incident, would in our way of thinking, be a great offence against that not sufficiently esteemed maxim *Nil admirari*; in which, according to the opinion of persons experienced in the knowledge of human affairs, lies concealed the proper and great secret of wisdom; that, which constitutes a true adept. The charming *Cleonissa* was a woman, and had therefore her share of the foibles nature has appropriated to her sex, and without which this half of the human race, would neither have been so well fitted for it's destination in this sublunary world, nor in reality, so amiable as it is. And indeed, how little merit would there be in virtue itself, if not put to the proof by these very foibles themselves.

LET this be as it will, the lady as soon as she beheld our Hero, was sensible of something,

something, which might have alarmed the virtue of a common mortal. But there are virtues of so strong a cast, that nothing can disturb them; and her's was of this kind. She gave herself up to the impressions which were made upon her without her consent, with all the confidence which the consciousness of her own fortitude could inspire. The perfection of the object justified the extraordinary esteem she shewed for him. Great souls are the properest to do justice to each other; and their self-love is so much concerned in it, that they may carry a partiality for each other very far, without being suspected of particular views. Exclusive of this, so unworthy a suspicion could not fall on the elevated *Cleonissa*; while at the same time nothing was more natural than an expectation of exciting in our Hero, the same admiration, if not even a higher degree of it, than she experienced for him. This expectation as naturally changed itself into an astonish-

ment mixed with chagrin, when she found herself deceived in it; and what else could happen from this astonishment, but an ardent desire of procuring ample satisfaction to her self-love extremely offended by his indifference? If even she herself had been indifferent, she might justly expect, that so nice an observer might have known how to discover her worth, and to distinguish a *Cleonissa* from those lesser stars, which were allowed to shine only in her absence. How much must she also have been offended, that she had made advances to him, with that noble enthusiasm with which privileged souls elevate themselves above the little scruples of more vulgar persons, and that she had not kept back the demonstration of her sympathetic esteem, till she had been assured of his?

As it depended entirely upon her vanity to determine the greatness of the injustice according to the sense she had of her own merit, so was the rage she entertained

tained against our Hero, the most furious that could possibly enter into the heart of an offended Fair. She was determined to try the whole united power of her intellectual and corporeal charms, assisted by all the artifices of the most subtle coquetry (of which so universal a genius must at least possess the theory) in order to triumph over this ungrateful man. And when she should have thus by leading him on fluctuating between hope and fear, brought him to the lamentable situation of a *Celador* consumed with love and desire, and when she should have diverted herself long enough with the spectacle of his sighs, tears, complaints, exclamations, and all other violent expressions of amorous phrenzy,—she at length designed suddenly to make him feel all the rigour of the most chilling disdain. Thus well concerted was this plan of revenge, with so much diligence and skill were the measures taken; and we must confess that, if the success of a project depended sole-

ly on its being well conducted, the beautiful *Cleonissa* must have had the most complete triumph that ever was obtained over the arrogance of a refractory heart.

WHETHER the lady, supposing *Agathon* to have been caught in her snare, would have been capable of carrying her rage to the extremity she proposed,—is a problematical question, the determination of which, if chance had so ordered it, would probably have occasioned no small embarrassment even to the lady herself. But *Agathon* did not suffer matters to go so far. Hence we are furnished with a fresh proof, that it was given to none but a *Danae* to discover the weak side of our Hero.

Cleonissa had already exhausted half her arts, e'er he was aware, that there was a design formed against him. The moment he perceived it, his indifference increased in proportion as she redoubled her efforts; or to speak more plainly, the contrast between the artifices she employed,

ployed, which were at last carried as far as indecency, and the affected sublimity of her turn of thought, as well as the majesty of her virtue, had so perverse an effect upon him, that the beauteous *Cleonissa* saw herself obliged entirely to forego the hopes of the triumph with which she had flattered her vanity. The fury she was thrown into by this, changed itself by degrees into the most complete hatred, that ever (to use *Shakespear's* expression) turned the milk of a female breast into gall. All that was left for her virtue to do in these circumstances, was, so skilfully to conceal the workings of this passion, that neither *Agathon* nor the court should perceive, with what impatience she longed for an occasion to make him feel the effects of it.

MATTERS were in this situation, when *Dionysius*, cloyed with the quiet possession of the charming *Bacchidion*, and disgusted with her dancing, first took it into his head to observe that *Cleonissa* was

beautiful. He had not long remarked this with some attention, than it appeared to him, that he had never seen so beautiful a creature ; and now he began to be surprized, that he had not taken notice of this before. At last he recollected that the lady had ever distinguished herself by a very rigid virtue, and an avowed propensity to metaphysical knowledge. He therefore no longer entertained a doubt, but that this must have been the circumstance which had prevented him from doing justice to her beauty sooner. A kind of mechanical respect for virtue, proceeding from his indolence, and an apprehension of the difficulties he had imagined there were in subduing it, would probably have kept him even this time within the bounds of an inactive admiration, if one of those trifling incidents, which are so often the causes of the greatest events, had not instantly changed his natural insensibility into the most restless passion.

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As this incident has always remained an anecdote, so we cannot ascertain whether (as some Sicilian historians pretend) it was the same incident as that, by which in modern times, the sister of the famous Duke of *Marlborough* laid the first foundation of the extraordinary fortune of her family; or whether he might by chance have surprized her in the same situation, as the *Actæon* of the poets had the misfortune to see the beautiful *Diana*. So far however is certain, that from the time of this mysterious incident, the passion and designs of *Dionysius* took such a turn, that the charming *Cleonissa's* virtue was not a little embarrassed, how it should reconcile what she owed to herself with her duty to her Prince. *Dionysius* was so pressing, so imprudent—and she had so many people to be cautious of—She, who in every other woman had a rival, and was watched at every step by a hundred jealous eyes, which would not fail with as many tongues to whisper to

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the whole world, the least *faux-pas* she should commit. On the one hand, a monarch burning with love at her feet, ready to give her up an absolute power over himself, and over all that belonged to him, for the smallest tokens of her favour;—on the other, the splendid fame of a virtue, which no mortal had ever yet dared to consider as frail, the confidence of the Princesses, the esteem of her husband:—It must be allowed, that a thousand other persons would not have known how to extricate themselves from circumstances drawing them so many different ways at once. But *Cleonissa*, though she was sensible of the difficulty from the first, knew so well how to manage, that the whole plan of her conduct scarce cost her one sleepless night. She perceived at the first view, how important were the advantages she would derive from her virtue in these circumstances. The same method that would contribute, by a prudent use of such encouragements as were
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necessary, still more to confirm her reputation, and maintain the favour of the Princesses, was indisputably the most proper to retain the inconstant *Dionysius* for ever in her chains. To his declarations, protestations, intreaties and threats, (for he was neither fond nor artful enough to put in practice any more subtle attacks) she therefore opposed a virtue, the obstinacy of which must necessarily have tired him out, if compassion for the situation she had been forced to reduce him to, had not at the same time enabled her to lessen his pain, by all those little palliatives, which in reality might be considered as marks of some favour, though to such a lover as *Dionysius*, they did not appear to subtract too much from the dignity of her virtue. The tender sensibility of her heart,—the constraint she was obliged to put upon herself, in order to withstand so amiable a Prince,—the silent confession of her weakness, which, at the same time that she opposed the most

resolute resistance to him, escaped involuntarily from her charming bosom :—O! virtuous *Cleonissa*! what an excellent actress wast thou!—What must *Dionysius* have been, if with such appearances he had given up the hope of being still happy at last.

IN the mean time, notwithstanding all the precautions taken by *Cleonissa*, and *Dionysius* himself, the passion of this Prince, and the insuperable virtue of his Goddess, was a secret which the whole court was acquainted with, though they did not seem to know any more of the matter than if they had neither had eyes nor ears. *Cleonissa*, from the moment that she could no longer doubt of his passion, had the prudence to intrust the sisters of the Prince with the confidence; these again had discovered all in confidence to his Queen, and the Queen to his mother. The Princesses, who had ever ineffectually bewailed his former extravagancies, and had taken a particular
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dislike to the poor *Bacchidion*, for which there is no other reason to be given but their caprice, were overjoyed to find that his inclinations were at last directed towards a virtuous object. They flattered themselves from the extraordinary prudence of the beautiful *Cleonissa*, that she might possibly lead him imperceptibly in the right way. *Cleonissa* gave them every time a faithful account of all that had passed between her and her lover,---at least of all that it was necessary for the Princesses to know: all the rules by which she was to conduct herself towards him were preconcerted in the Queen's closet. This good lady who for her own ease, had the misfortune to be too sensibly affected with the King's indifference, did all she could to second the efforts, which the virtuous *Cleonissa* exerted, to bring the Prince back within the bounds of his duty. All this made a kind of an intrigue, which notwithstanding the apparent tranquillity, set all the internal
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part of the court in commotion. *Philistus* alone, who had most reason to be observant, knew nothing of what every one else knew; at least his whole behaviour shewed such a singular security, that, if we were unacquainted with the extraordinary confidence he always reposed in the virtue of his lady, we must of necessity suspect that he had certain views in this conduct which could not do much honour to his character.

EVERY thing went on as it should; *Dionysius* pursued the attack with the utmost perseverance, and with hopes, which the brave resistance of the wise *Cleonissa* seemed to make doubtful.—Love seemed as yet to have gained but little ground upon her virtue, though this began gradually to relax it's majesty, and suffered it to be understood that she was not entirely disinclined, under sufficient security to engage in a secret correspondence, so long as it was confined to a mere love of the soul.—The Princesses, with the utmost confidence

confidence in the modest charms of their friend, waited the developement of the farce—and *Philistus* had as much complaisance, as much indolence as had ever been seen; when *Agathon*, unluckily for him, and for *Sicily*, through a zeal scarce to be justified in a statesman of so much penetration, was induced to interrupt by his unseasonable interposition, the happy success of the several views, which *Dionysius*—*Cleonissa*—the Princesses—and perhaps *Philistus* too—imagined to be so near at hand.

C H A P. III.

Great Offenses against the State, committed by Agathon.—Consequences of them.

THE intimacy *Dionysius* lived in with his favourite, and the natural want every lover feels of some confidant, to whom he may communicate his pains,
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or his happiness, had not suffered him to keep his new passion a secret from *Agathon*, who at first pushed his complaisance so far, as to give a tedious attention to the most talkative lover that ever existed, while he entertained him for whole hours on the interests of his heart; it not once occurring to this good Prince, that such particulars could not possibly be of so much importance to a third person, as they were to him. Without directly blaming his choice (from which he might have expected some bad effects) he contented himself at first with representing to him in so formidable a light, the difficulties he would meet with from a lady of such rigid and systematic virtue, that he was in hopes of deterring him from an undertaking which in all probability would at least be protracted to an immoderate length; but when he perceived, that *Dionysius* instead of being wearied with the resistance he complained of, entertained every day greater hopes of
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tiring out this rigorous virtue by obstinate and repeated attacks: He then imagined he should not lay too much to the fair *Cleonissa*'s charge, if he suspected her of artful behaviour, which seemed to encourage the passion of the Prince, at the same time that it deprived him of all hope. The more narrowly he observed her, the more proofs he discovered to confirm his suspicion, and as his natural antipathy to the pride of virtue concurred with these circumstances, he was now entirely convinced that the wise and virtuous *Cleonissa*, was merely an impostor, whose design it was, by a feigned resistance, to preserve the reputation of being invincible, and by this means at the same time more strongly to intangle the credulous Prince in her snares. He now began to consider the affair in a serious light, and thought himself obliged, as well by the friendship he owed to the Prince, for whom, notwithstanding all his foibles, he felt a kind of attachment,

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as out of regard to the public welfare, strongly to oppose a connection that might have been attended with very pernicious consequences to both. *Bacchidion* without being so regular a beauty, was in his eye infinitely more amiable than *Cleonissa*. A good heart—or to speak with greater propriety, a fortunate organisation—notwithstanding the general and just prejudice entertained against persons of her cast, made her appear to him in comparison with this virtuous matron, a very estimable person. And as she began to be uneasy at the constantly increasing indifference of the Prince, and had recourse to him for protection, he had the less scruple to support her interests with somewhat greater zeal than was, perhaps, consistent with the dignity of his character. *Dionysius* loved her no more; though he still laid such claims to her, as love only should give. The charming *Bacchidion* was now but too sensible that she only supplied the place of
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her rival in his arms, and though only a dancer, yet she looked upon it as unworthy of her to extinguish a passion that another had excited. *Dionysius* from the continued severity of his new mistress, seemed more than ever to want such indulgence; and for this reason *Agathon* advised *Bacchidion* to assume on her part, an appearance of cruelty, and to try whether an indifferent and capricious behaviour, mixed with a proper degree of affectation, might not effect more than tender complaint and redoubled complaisance. This advice succeeded so well, that *Agathon*, who was too soon secure of his victory, thought he had now found a proper opportunity of making a frank confession to *Dionysius*, that he gave little credit to *Cleomissa's* pretended virtue. The event of the secret conference they had together upon this subject, was not answerable to our hero's expectation. Whatever *Agathon* could suggest to the Prince, to the disadvantage of his new Goddess, proved

proved at the most, that she was not so estimable as he had imagined, but they did not lessen his passion for her; the less virtuous she was, the better was she for his designs. He did not indeed let *Agathon* perceive these noble sentiments, but *Cleonissa* herself was soon convinced of them. *Dionysius* had no sooner discovered that the virtue of the lady was only a pretence, than he hastened as much as possible to avail himself of this discovery, and astonished her by proceedings which made a contrast highly injurious to his former behaviour, and still more to the dignity of her character. He was indeed discreet enough not to tell her directly what ideas had been given of her; but his behaviour said it so plainly, that she could no longer doubt that some person had done her an ill office with him. This circumstance indeed threw her into no small embarrassment how she should reconcile what she owed to her offended dignity, with the apprehension of entirely

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ly discouraging a lover of such importance, by immoderate rigour. But an imagination like her's knew how to extricate itself from the most difficult situations; and *Dionysius* parted from her convinced more than ever, that she was virtue itself, and could only be induced by the power of that sympathy, which from the first had attracted her tender soul towards him, one day to satisfy those hopes which she neither allowed him to entertain, nor entirely forbid. From this time his passion, and the authority of the lady daily increased; the fair *Bacchidion* was formally dismissed; and *Agathon* might have read in his master's eyes, if he had not heard it from himself that he was in good hopes of receiving in a few days, the last sighs of expiring virtue, from the lips of the tender and now faintly resisting *Cleonissa*. *Agathon* thought it was now full time to take a step which nothing but the utmost necessity could justify, but which in his opinion was a
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most infallible method of putting a timely end to this dangerous intrigue. He therefore sent for *Philistus*, and disclosed to him with all the confidence of an honest man, who thinks he is speaking to one of the same cast, the great danger his honour, and the virtue of his lady were exposed to. He discovered indeed to the noble *Philistus*, nothing but what he had known long before; but *Philistus* did not the less affect a surprize. He thanked him however in the strongest manner for so undoubted a proof of his friendship, and assured him that he would think of some proper method to secure his lady, of whom he moreover had the best opinion in the world, against all the pursuits of love.

It is a very right thing to take every opportunity of inculcating this lesson, that we ought to oblige people in their way, and not in our own. *Agathon* thought he had done no inconsiderable service to *Philistus*, and would have been

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not a little surprized at the observations this worthy man made upon him as soon as he was alone. In reality *Philistus* must necessarily have been chagrined, at seeing all the advantages of his hitherto discreet inattention, at once lost by so unseasonable a care of his honour. But at present he could not without appearing in *Agathon's* eyes as a betrayer of his own honour, do otherwise, than feign the part of a jealous husband. The comedy by this means acquired in a few days a very tragical turn.—How much trouble might the principal characters in this farce have spared themselves, if they had taken off the mask, and had appeared to each other *in puris naturalibus*? But these people in the great world are such punctilious observers of decorum,—and are to be commended for it; since it is always a proof that they are ashamed of their real appearance, and a tacit acknowledgment that it is their duty to be somewhat better than they are.—*Cleonissa* therefore justified

tified herself to her husband, by appealing to the Princesses as undeniable testimonies of the unspotted innocence of her conduct. A more sublime and pathetic piece of eloquence never was heard, than the speech in which she demonstrated the injustice of his suspicion; and the good man could not at last extricate himself any otherwise than by naming the friend, who, however from a good intention, had brought on this little fit of jealousy, which he now perfectly knew to be highly unnecessary and blameable. The fury of a tempestuous sea,—of a hornet provoked to rage,—or of a lioness deprived of her young, are but feeble images when compared with the rage, which burnt in *Cleonissa's* virtuous bosom at the mention of *Agathon's* name. In reality nothing was to be compared with this, except the pleasure with which she was intoxicated at the thought that she should now at length have it in her power to wreak her long wished for vengeance on
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this ungrateful despiser of her charms. She abused *Dionysius*, whom she called to account for the insupportable injury she had suffered from her husband, so much, and with such fury, that he however unwillingly, (for he was not inclined to betray his favourite) at length discovered what little reason she had to be obliged to *Agathon* for his opinion of her. Now, as she said, the whole secret was out; and in fact she could not but wonder at her own simplicity, as she could not have promised herself any better treatment from a man from whose revenge she naturally had the worse to expect.—If *Dionysius* was astonished at these words, we may easily conceive how he looked when she disclosed to him circumstantially, and in confidence, compelled to it for her own justification, that *Agathon's* hatred to her arose only from her not having thought proper to approve his passion. This indeed was not strictly true. But as she was now reduced to the necessity of

Vol. IV. E justifying

justifying herself; it was natural, that she should rather chuse to do it at the expence of a person who was odious to her, than at her own. So far is certain, that she thereby more than sufficiently obtained her end. *Dionysius* was seized with so violent a fit of jealousy against his unworthy favourite,—the man, who was unworthy of the regard of a *Dionysius*, was *Agathon*!—that *Cleonissa*, (who apprehended that a sudden rupture might give occasion to disagreeable explanations) was obliged to exert all her influence to restrain him. She convinced him of the necessity of proceeding cautiously with a man, who was unfortunately the idol of the nation. *Dionysius* felt the force of this remonstrance, and his hatred for *Agathon* was the more confirmed by it. The Princesses likewise took a part in the affair, and censured our Hero very much, because, instead of restraining the Prince from extravagances, he had taken such a creature as *Bacchidion* with

with so much zeal under his protection. No scruple was made of attributing this zeal to some secret motive; and *Philistus* under hand produced a number of testimonies, explaining several circumstances in the Prince's closet, which seemed to place the continence of our hero, and the fidelity of the fair *Bacchidion* in a doubtful light. This minister probably found the views of his master upon his virtuous lady so chaste and innocent, that it would have been injurious and ridiculous to be jealous of the friendship he honoured her with. A daily increase of the royal favour justified and rewarded so noble a complaisance. *Timocrates* found also an opportunity in these circumstances, of regaining his former part of confidant; and both these statesmen now joined with the triumphant *Cleonissa*, in hastening our hero's disgrace, while they loaded him with assurances of their friendship.

IN this and the foregoing chapter, we have seen a very memorable example, (and would to God these examples did not occur so often in real life !) how easy it is to give to the vicious character of a dark execrable soul the complexion of virtue. *Agathon* at this time experienced that it is not less easy to tully the purest virtue with odious colours. He had already experienced this at *Athens*; but, by the comparison he made between that disaster and the present, his Athenian opponents appeared to him as fair, when contrasted with the contemptible creatures by whom he was now sacrificed, as they had before appeared black, at a time when he knew none worse than themselves.—The vivacity of his present feelings it is probable did mislead his judgment in this respect; for to say the truth, the whole difference between republican and courtly dissimulation, seems to consist in this, that in republics men are obliged to assume the entire outward form

form of virtuous manners ; whereas on the contrary in courts, it is thought enough if they give a plausible name to such crimes, as are either ennobled by the example of the Prince, or are necessary for the accomplishment of his views. In reality to hear a capering, flattering, cringing, fine-drest knave, descant on the duty he owes to his own honour, even at the time that he is conscious he never had any, or in the instant that he is deliberating with himself how to get rid of what he had, is not more disgusting than to see a formal, troublesome, starch knave, who under the masque of temperance, moderation, and punctilious observance of all the external ceremonies of religion and morality, is a more implacable enemy to all those who think differently from himself, or will not second all his purposes, and makes not the smallest difficulty whenever his own interest is concerned, of employing all his credit to defeat a good design, or promote a bad

one. Impartially considered, this is the more wicked man; he is more essentially a hypocrite; whereas the other is only a player, who does not desire to be taken in reality for the character he assumes; well satisfied if his fellow comedians and the audience favour the deception, he never once thinks of being anxious, whether it be in earnest or not.

Agathon had now sufficient leisure to make reflections of this kind; for his credit and influence was visibly on the decline. Outwardly indeed every thing appeared the same as formerly. *Dionysius* and the whole court caressed him as much as ever, and *Cleonissa* seemed to hold it unworthy of her to give him any cause of mortification. But for this he was made to suffer the more by underhand, secret and indirect means. He could not but see, how by degrees, under a thousand false and frivolous pretences his best ordinances were either repealed, as crude, superfluous and prejudicial,

dicial, or rendered useless by the publication of others.—How those few among his adherents, who were possessors of real merit, were removed.—How all his aims were misinterpreted, his actions placed in an arbitrary, false light, and all his qualifications or services made ridiculous. Even at the time they were extolling his talents and virtues, they treated him as if he could not lay claim to the least degree of either. Indeed they still preserved out of political motives (as they are usually styled) the appearance of acting upon the same principles he had pursued in his administration; but in every event that occurred, the steps which were taken were directly contrary to those that would have been taken by him; and in short, vice reigned again with as despotic a sway as ever.

THIS was the time to avail himself of the condition he had annexed to his agreement with *Dionysius*, and to withdraw himself when he was certain, that he

could be of no farther service at that Prince's court. This was indeed the advice given him by the philosopher *Aristippus*, the only one of his court friends who remained true to him. "You should, said he to him in a familiar conference upon the present state of affairs, you should either not have engaged with *Dionysius*, or else, when you once had accepted of your office, you ought to have accommodated your moral ideas, or at least your actions, to circumstances. Upon this theatre of dissimulation, deceit, intrigues, adulation and treachery, where virtues and obligations are complied with merely from mercenary views, and where every countenance is a mask ; in a word, at a court, there is no other rule but that of convenience, no other policy but that which endeavours to make every circumstance coincide with our own designs. As to the rest, it is perhaps a question, whether you have done well to differ with *Dionysius*, upon a point so trifling in itself.

self. In the eyes of a philosopher, I confess *Bacchidion* the dancing girl is much more estimable than this majestic *Cleonissa*, who with all her metaphysics and virtue, is neither more nor less than a false, imperious and vile woman. *Bacchidion* has done the state no injury, and *Cleonissa* will do an infinite deal of mischief."—"From this consideration, interrupted *Agathon*, I have declared myself in favour of the former and against the latter"—"Yet it was easy to foresee, that *Cleonissa* would triumph, said *Aristippus*:"—"But an honest man, *Aristippus*, does not side with the party that will conquer, but with that which is in the right, or is least in the wrong."—"My dear *Agathon*, an honest man, who will live at court, must get rid of great part of his integrity, to make it consistent with his prudence. Is it not a pity, that so much good as you have already done, so much more as you would hereafter have done, should be thrown away, merely because you would

not understand a beautiful lady, who told you so plainly, that all the court (one single person excepted) understood it, that she absolutely—would be beloved? But still this crime might possibly have been forgiven, if you had but been complaisant enough to assist her in her designs upon *Dionysius*. If you even would not have condescended to this, yet where was the necessity of opposing her? What pernicious consequence would have followed, if you had remained neuter? The little *Bacchidion* would have danced no more, and *Cleonissa* would have had the honour of supplying her place, till the tyrant had been as much cloyed with her, as he has been with so many others. This is all that would have happened, and suppose that you would have been obliged to share the power with her, yet at least you would have preserved an equilibrium, and would still have had credit enough to do a great deal of good. If you had seemed to be upon good terms
with

with her, your office, and your intimacy with the Prince, would have furnished you with a thousand opportunities of setting her aside insensibly, and in the best manner in the world, as soon as her favours had ceased to have the charms of novelty.—But I know you too well, *Agathon*; you are not fit for dissimulation, cunning, and court artifices; your heart is too noble, and if you will permit me to say it, your imagination too warm, to allow you ever to accustom yourself to that kind of prudence, without which it is impossible long to preserve the favour of the great. Indeed I know not any court that would deserve to have an *Agathon* to conduct it. I might have told you nearly as much as this before, when I joined in persuading you to engage yourself with *Dionysius*, but it was better you should be convinced of it by your own experience. Retire now before the storm which I see gathering shall break over your head. *Dionysius* deserves not

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such

such a friend as thou art. How much hast thou deceived thyself, if thou hast ever imagined, that he had an esteem for thee! How is it possible, that abilities such as his should have carried him so far? Even at the time that he was most strongly prepossessed in thy favour, he was attached to thee from no other principle, than that which excited his love to his monkeys and his parrots—because you amused him. His favour might as readily have been bestowed upon any other newly-arrived person, who had played upon the lute still better than you did. No, *Agathon*, thou art not fitted to live with such people; retire, thou hast done enough for thy glory. The folly of a new administration will best justify the wisdom of thine. Thy actions, thy virtues, and a whole nation who will wish for thy return, and cherish thy memory, will best protect thee against the calumnies and impertinent censures of a little court full of fools and infamous slaves,
whose

whose hatred does thee more honour than their approbation. Thou art in circumstances to be able to live with credit in an independent private situation: thy friends at *Tarentum* will receive thee with open arms. I repeat it, *Agathon*, leave a Prince who is fit for his slaves, and whose slaves deserve such a Prince; and only consider how you shall enjoy life, after having made the experiment, how difficult, how dangerous, and in general how fruitless it is, to labour for the happiness of others."

THUS spoke *Aristippus*, and *Agathon* would have done well to follow such good advice: but how is it possible, that the person himself who performs a capital part in any piece, should judge of it with as much calmness as a mere spectator? *Agathon* beheld these matters in a very different point of view. He considered himself as a man who had engaged in an undertaking to promote the welfare of *Sicily*. Why did I come to *Syracuse*?—
said

said he to himself,—and with what views did I accept of the office of a friend and counsellor to this tyrant? Did I this, to be either a slave to his passions, or an agent of tyranny?—Or had I a great and upright design?—Should I ever have engaged with him, if he had not given me hopes, that virtue would at length prevail over his vices?—He hath deceived me, and the experience I have of his disposition, convinceth me that he is incorrigible. But, will it be noble in me to abandon a people, whose welfare was the end of my endeavours; a people, who consider me as their benefactor, as a prey to the caprice of this effeminate man, and to the rapaciousness of his flatterers and slaves?—What obligations have I to him, which his ungrateful, base behaviour to me has not cancelled, and annulled?—Or if I still have obligations to him, are not those infinitely more sacred, which connect me to a country, that by my choice, and by the services I have

have done it, is become my second native land?—Who then is this *Dionysius*? What right hath he to the supreme power he arrogates to himself? Whom besides *Agathon* hath he to thank for that single right, he can with any plausibility alledge? How long from a tyrant abhorred by all the world, has he commenced a king? Is it not from the time that I have conciliated the affections of the people to him by an equitable and beneficent administration? He threw the burden of the state upon me; he concealed his vices by means of my virtues; he appropriated my merits to himself, and enjoyed the fruits of them: ungrateful man!—And now, when he thinks himself sufficiently established to do without me, he abandons himself again to his own disposition, and sets out with annulling all the good I have done in his name; just as if he were ashamed of having deviated for a time from his character, and as if he could not be too much in haste

to

to inform the whole world, that it has been *Agathon*, not *Dionysius*, who has discovered to the Sicilians a dawn of better days, and given them hopes of recovering from the mal-treatment of a succession of wicked governors. What shall I then be if I should quit them in circumstances which require my assistance more than ever?—No,—*Dionysius* has given proofs enough of his being incorrigible, and by perseverance in his vices, will be confirmed in the ridiculous imagination, that respect is due to him. It is time to put an end to the farce, and shew this little theatrical king the office he is fitted for by his personal qualifications.

OUR readers will see from this specimen of *Agathon's* soliloquy, that he was still far from having subdued that enthusiastic turn of mind which hath hitherto been the source of all his failings, as well as of his greatest actions. We have no reason to doubt of the sincerity of this monologue; his soul was used to deal
sincerely

sincerely with itself. We may therefore conclude, that he thought himself obliged to take the resolution of exciting a revolt against *Dionysius*, by motives altogether as virtuous as those, which, fifteen years after, encouraged one of the most generous men that ever existed, *Timoleon* of *Corinth*, to undertake the restoration of *Sicily* to freedom. But it is not therefore the less certain, that a quick sense of the personal injustice that was done to him, resentment against the tyrant's ingratitude, and chagrin at seeing himself sacrificed to the despicable intrigues of a coquet, had a great influence over his present turn of thinking, and did not a little contribute to kindle that heroic fire which burned in his soul. In fact, he had no other obligations towards the *Sicilians* than such as arose from his agreement with *Dionysius*, and which by this very agreement itself, were dissolved so soon as his services should no longer be agreeable to the King. *Syracuse* was not
his

his native country. *Dionysius* had acquired a kind of right by the tacit consent to the succession, in virtue of which he had ascended the throne of his father. *Agathon* himself would not have entered into his service if he had not considered him as a legitimate Prince. The same motives which had then induced him to prefer a monarchy to a republic, and hitherto to oppose the views of *Dion*, prevailed now in their full force. It was very uncertain whether a revolt against *Dionysius* would really put the Sicilians in a better situation, or give them another, and perhaps still a worse master, since they had given so many proofs of their being unable to bear freedom. *Dionysius* had power enough to make the deposition of him a difficult matter, and the pernicious effects of a civil war were the only certain consequences which could be foreseen from so doubtful an enterprise. — All these considerations would have had no small weight in the scale of

a cool and impartial deliberation, and would probably have counterpoised the opposite motives. But *Agathon* was neither cool nor impartial,—he was a man; his vanity was injured in the tenderest part. The passion into which he was thrown by this, gave a new colouring to all the objects that were before him. *Dionysius* whose vices he had at first considered with friendly eyes as infirmities, now appeared to him in the detestable light of a tyrant. The more favourably he before thought of *Philistus*, the greater aversion had he now for his character, since he had once found him false and mean; there was nothing so infamous, nothing so shameless, that he would not have imputed to such a man. The chagrin he felt at seeing the alluring images he had represented to himself of the happiness of the Sicilians under his administration, now entirely gave them a new power over his imagination. He could not bear that men who were his adver-

saries

faries only because they were enemies to all that was good, enemies to virtue and the public welfare, should obtain such a triumph. He considered it as a general duty to oppose the designs of the wicked, and the post he had maintained nearly for the space of two years in *Sicily*, made it clear (as he thought) that he was called to a particular exertion of this duty in the present instance. These considerations, besides their own proper force had also his imagination in their favour, and therefore must necessarily overcome all that prudence could suggest against them.

As soon as *Agathon* had resolved upon his plan, he laboured to carry it into execution.—*Dion*, who was then at *Athens*, had a considerable party in *Sicily*, by means of which he had hitherto exerted every possible effort to obtain his recall from the Prince. He had made particular applications to *Agathon* for this purpose, as soon as he was informed of his credit

credit with *Dionysius*. But *Agathon* at that time had not so favourable an opinion of *Dion*'s character, as the academy at *Athens*; a virtue mixed with pride, inflexibility, and austerity, appeared to him, if not suspicious, at least not very amiable; he apprehended with reason, that the disposition of this Prince would never suffer him to be quiet; and that notwithstanding his republican principles, he would be as impatient of sharing the supreme authority in the state with any person, as of living in it without authority. Instead therefore of assisting in his being recalled by *Dionysius*, he had given full scope to that extreme aversion he had before shewed for him, and by this behaviour had drawn upon himself some displeasure from *Dion*'s friends, who were as much offended, that he had not done any thing in favour of this Prince, as if he had acted against him. But since his own experience had confirmed every idea that the enemies of
Dionysius

Dionysius could entertain of him, his sentiments of *Dion* were totally changed; this Prince who undoubtedly had great qualities, now appeared to him as an upright man, in whom the tiresome prospect of public misery, under an infamous government, and the ever fruitless endeavours of striving against the torrent of corruption, had excited a just and lasting discontent, which notwithstanding it had the appearance of splenetic melancholy, was in reality the result of the noblest love of humanity. He therefore resolved to join with him; he disclosed himself to *Dion's* friends, and they, rejoiced at the approbation of a man, who by his talents and his favour with the people was capable of gaining the upper-hand for their party, discovered to him in return the whole disposition of *Dion's* affairs, the number of his friends, and the secret preparations, which in expectation of some favourable incident, had already been made for his return into Si-

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city: And thus *Agathon* in a short time from being the friend and prime minister of *Dionysius*, became the chief of a conspiracy against him, in which all those persons joined, who from more noble or more interested motives were dissatisfied with the present mode of government. *Agathon* traced out a plan for the conduct of the whole affair; and this occasioned a secret epistolary correspondence with *Dion*, by which the favourable opinion they began to entertain of each other, was still more confirmed. The court, sunk in pleasure and voluptuous security, favoured the progress of the conspiracy by a negligence which had so little the appearance of being natural, that the conspirators were alarmed at it. They redoubled their vigilance, and, (what is mostly a matter of surprize, though very common in enterprizes of this kind) notwithstanding the great number of those who were in the secret, every thing remained so quiet, that from outward appearances,

pearances no man would have been led into any suspicion; if on the one hand, the improbability that *Agathon* should consider his disgrace with so much indifference as he seemed to do; and if on the other, the information received of *Dion's* preparations which were not kept very private, had not at length excited the attention of *Philistus*, who was naturally mistrustful. From this instant *Agathon*, and all those who were known to be *Dion's* friends, were narrowly watched by a thousand invisible eyes? At length *Philistus* had the good fortune to seize a slave, who came from *Athens* with letters to *Agathon*. From these letters, which disclosed the reasons, why *Dion* had not been able to effect his intended landing in *Sicily*, so soon as it had been agreed upon between them, it appeared very evidently that *Agathon* and the rest of *Dion's* friends were concerned in his spontaneous return from exile; but nothing was contained therein which intimated

any

any design against the present government, except a few indeterminate expressions which might appear to conceal some mysterious transaction. We may easily conceive the alarm this discovery raised in the tyrant's closet. It could not but be felt that there was reason enough to apprehend the worst; and therefore *Philistus* held it most adviseable to treat the matter as a secret of state. *Agathon* was taken into custody on pretence of several offenses against government, though nothing precise was told to the public, and the true reason was most industriously concealed. It was thought better to embarrass *Dion's* friends (which from panic were represented more numerous than they really were) than to drive them to despair; and thus while the party was watched with the greatest caution, time was gained, and the state put in a proper situation to resist any sudden attack of the enemy.

WE are already accustomed to see our Hero greater in adverse fortune than in any other situation. Prepared against the worst he could expect from his enemies, he resolved not to afford them the triumph of seeing *Agathon* submit to any thing that was unworthy of him. He absolutely refused to give any answer to *Philistus* and *Timocrates*, who were appointed to inquire into the crimes that were laid to his charge. He desired to be heard by the Prince himself, and appealed for this to the conditions that had been settled between them. But *Dionysius* had not the courage to support a secret conference with his former favourite. Attempts were made to shake his firmness by harsh treatment and menaces; and the beautiful *Cleonissa* would have given her voice for the severest sentence, if the tyrant's timidity, and the prudence of his ministers could have been prevailed upon to follow her suggestions. She was therefore obliged to be satisfied with

with the hope that was given her, that as soon as *Dion* was dispatched one way or other, *Agathon* should be made a public sacrifice to her vindictive virtue.

IN the mean while *Agathon's* friends were under the greater apprehensions for him, as they were sufficiently acquainted with the malice of his enemies, to be assured that they would exert their utmost efforts to prejudice the tyrant against him, and knew that the Prince was weak enough to suffer himself to be led by them: for voluptuous Princes are oftentimes cruel against their natural inclinations, from their inability to resist the importunities of their favourites. *Agathon's* friends, therefore, secretly employed all the means they could, without exciting a sedition, the consequence of which would have been too uncertain, to promote his delivery. *Dion*, upon this occasion, gave a proof of his magnanimity, for he wrote a friendly letter to *Dionysius*, in which he engaged to dis-

miss his troops, and wait for his recall as a favour depending merely on the good will of his Prince, upon condition that *Agathon* should be set at liberty, whose only crime was that he had interested himself for his return into his native country. However noble this proceeding was, and however easily a reconciliation between *Dionysius* and *Dion* might have been effected by it, yet would it have been of very little service to *Agathon*, if his Italian friends had not hastened to lay before the tyrant motives of a more urgent nature. But at this very time, ambassadors arrived from *Tarentum*, in the name of *Archytas*, whose influence was all sufficient in that republic, who were commissioned to procure the deliverance of his friend, and in case of necessity to declare, that this republic would be obliged to support *Dion's* party with all her force, if *Dionysius* should hesitate any longer to do complete justice to this Prince as well as to *Agathon*. *Diony-*

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sius knew the character of *Archytas* too well, to have any doubts of the seriousness of this menace. He therefore hoped to extricate himself in the best manner out of this business, if besides giving assurances that he was not averse to a reconciliation with his brother-in-law, he acquiesced in the enlargement of *Agathon*. But our Hero declared that he would neither accept of his deliverance as a favour from *Dionysius*, nor be indebted for it to the intercession of his friend. He demanded that the crimes for which he had been taken into custody, should be publicly declared and inquired into, in the presence of *Dionysius*, the ambassadors from *Tarentum*, and the chief persons of *Syracuse*; and that his defence should be heard, and his sentence pronounced according to the laws; conscious as he was that except his recent connections with *Dion*, which it was easy to justify, his most malicious enemies could not alledge any thing against him,

with any appearance of truth, he was in the right to urge so solemn an inquiry. But this was what *Cleonissa*, *Philistus*, and the tyrant himself, who was very much embarrassed in this business, could not admit of; and as the Tarentines would not suffer him to protract the affair, *Dionysius* was at last obliged to declare publicly, that a strong suspicion of *Agathon's* being involved in a conspiracy against him, had been the only cause of his imprisonment; and that he would not delay an instant setting him at liberty, as soon as he should have cleared himself from this suspicion, by a solemn promise, guaranteed by the Tarentines, that he would not hereafter undertake any thing against the state. The readiness with which the Tarentine ambassadors consented to this proposal, shewed, that *Agathon's* delivery was owed entirely to *Archytas*; and we shall perhaps discover in the sequel, why this chief of a republic, not immediately involved

volved in the affair, should have undertaken this point with such extraordinary zeal. But *Agathon*, who would not owe his freedom to any ignominious step, could not for a long time be persuaded to make a declaration, which might be considered as a kind of confession, that he deserted the party he had been connected with. But this delicacy, which in respect to his circumstances was in fact too refined, must at length give way to the more important consideration, that by refusal of a composition apparently so equitable, he would expose himself to danger, without gaining any advantage for his party; for *Dionysius* would much rather let him depart quietly, than consent that he should acquire his freedom by so many fresh allurements to revenge, inspire *Dion's* faction by this means with new life, and then join himself with this Prince for his destruction. The charming picture the Tarentines drew of the happy life he would enjoy

in the tranquil bosom of their native country, and in the company of his friends, completed the effect which the violent state of disquietude, cares and impetuous passions, he had lived in for some time past, must necessarily have upon such a mind as his; it inspired him at the same time with that total abhorrence of public life, which he had conceived after his banishment from *Athens*, and restored to him that entire propensity to the contemplative life which he had entertained at *Delphos*. He therefore condescended at length to take a step which by *Dion's* friends would be imputed to him as a pusillanimous desertion of the good cause, but which in fact was the only step he could reasonably take in his present situation. How many disagreeable hours would he have saved himself, and how much anxiety and trouble would he have spared his friends, if he had followed the advice of the sage *Aristippus* two months sooner.

IT is a most certain proof of the virtue of a prime minister, though not often to be met with, if he retires poorer, or at least not richer than he was when he first entered on the theatre of public life. The character of an *Epaminondas*, a *Walsingham*, a *More*, and a *Tessin*, has indeed at all times been rare; but, if any thing can force the most obstinate opponents of virtue, even a *Hippias* himself, into a confession of it's reality, and an unwilling acknowledgment of it's divinity, it certainly is the example of such men. Heaven forbid, that I should ever think men like *Hippias* worthy of any other refutation! Let them go to *Acker*, and when they have beheld that single object under heaven, on which (to use the expression of an antient sage) even the Deity looks down with pleasure, when they have seen that venerable old man, who there contented with the noble and envied poverty of a *Fabricius* and a *Cincinnatus*, yet too virtuous to be proud:

of it, enjoys the only reward of a long and glorious life, devoted to God, to his King, and to his country, in the silent consciousness of his own goodness, and (as often as he looks on his *Telemachus*) in the hope, of not having entirely laboured in vain—who forgotten, and, perhaps, even persecuted by an ungrateful age, quietly wraps himself up in his virtue, and in his persuasion of a better immortality—if they have seen this truly great man, and if the sight of him does not effect what all the discourses of *Plato* and *Seneca* have been incapable of producing—then—let them think as they will, and act as they please with impunity; they deserve not to be refuted, because they are incorrigible—And thou, glorious and amiable old man, accept this, however perishable monument, from one, whose pen has never been prostituted to venal or interested commendations of the great of this world—I have no reward, no advantages to expect from thee

thee—thou wilt never read this—my design is pure as thy virtue—accept this feeble testimony of sincere esteem from one, who feels little worthy of esteem under the sun—accept this and his gratitude for those silent tears of transport, which (at an age when he was yet susceptible of that purest delight of humanity) the perusal of thy virtue-breathing letters drew from his eyes—these sentiments alone have influenced him on this occasion—he could not resolve to lay a constraint upon his heart—Let no man who shall read his book, expect an excuse for this digression.

AGATHON involved in cares for the welfare of *Sicily*, and engaged in efforts to promote the happiness of others, had so entirely forgot himself, that he would have quitted *Syracuse* no richer than he was at his departure from *Delphos*, or when he was banished from *Athens*, if luckily, soon after his elevation to a dignity, which gave him no small credit in

all the states of *Greece*, a part of his paternal estate had not fallen to him. The Athenians were then in need of an alliance with *Dionysius*, on account of some commercial views, and thought proper, before they had recourse to *Agathon's* mediation, to present him by their ambassadors with a decree, in virtue of which his sentence of banishment was not only repealed, but also the judgment by which he had formerly been deprived of his paternal estate, was reversed, and the unlawful possessors of it condemned to restore the whole immediately to him. *Agathon* generously accepted only the half, which was not indeed enough to supply the wants of an *Alcibiades* or a *Hippias*; but still it was more than even a philosopher of the sect of *Aristippus* would have required, to enable him to live with independance, convenience and ease; and this was enough for *Agathon*.

OUR Hero staid no longer at *Syracuse*, after he had recovered his freedom, than
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was necessary to see and thank his friends. *Dionysius*, who (we know very well) had the ambition of doing every thing in a handsome manner, desired that he might take leave of him in presence of his whole court. He loaded him, on this occasion, with commendations and caresses, and thought that he played the part of a refined statesman, in pretending that he consented reluctantly to his dismissal, and that they parted with each other upon the most friendly terms. *Agathon* had the complaisance to assist in acting this last scene of the comedy; and thus accompanied by the ambassadors of *Tarentum*, criticized by every one, censured by many, and known by few, even among those who thought most favourably of him, but regretted, and his return frequently wished by all good men, our Hero departed from a city and from a country, where he had enjoyed the satisfaction of leaving several monuments of his glorious administration behind him,

and

and from which he carried nothing away with him, besides a series of experience, which confirmed him in the resolution—Never again to expose himself to any thing of the same kind.



C H A P. IV.

Information to the Reader.

THANKS to the Gods (exclaims here the author of the Greek manuscript, as a man whose heart is suddenly relieved) thanks to the Gods, that we have brought our Hero out of the most dangerous of all infamous places, into which an honest man can be seduced, un sullied, and what is almost incredible, with all his virtue ! He is much indebted to good fortune, continues the manuscript; but—by dog (the great oath of the sage *Socrates*) what business had he too with a court ? He, who was sensible
that

that he was neither intended for a slave, nor a flatterer, nor a buffoon, what had he to do at the court of a *Dionysius*? What an idea—and is it possible that such an idea could enter into the brain of a wise man?—to make a vicious Prince virtuous!—Or what honest man, who feels a fund of sound reason and benevolence within himself, ever thought of going to a court, with an intention of exerting either the one or the other?—We must own, the enthusiasm—of a *Lycurgus*, who from a monarch became a private citizen, in order to make his country more happy, is a most noble thing:—or that of a *Leonidas*, who with three hundred men of equal resolution, devoted himself to death, in order to discourage as many myriads of Barbarians from fighting with the Greeks. However great, however excellent are these exploits, yet are they possible to human nature; and those who undertake them, may flatter themselves, that they will accomplish.

plish their designs. But no one surely has ever heard of a man, or a Hero, the son of any Goddess, or of any God, or even a God himself, having effected what *Agathon* undertook, when, with a lute in his hand, he engaged to become the *Mentor* of a *Dionysius*.

AFTER this humourous introduction, with which our author begins the chapter, there follows a long, and as it appears, rather a splenetic declamation against that class of mortals, who are stiled men of fashion; with various digressions on their mistresses—on their hounds—and the reason why it is dangerous for a prime minister to have too much genius, too much disinterestedness, and too much attachment to his master,—so far as we can perceive, this is one of the most remarkable, and most singular chapters in the whole work. But unfortunately the manuscript is in this place partly destroyed by rats, and partly so much injured by damp, that it would
be

be more easy to make out something properly connected from the papers of the *Cumæan Sibyl*, than from those fragments of words, sentences and periods, which still remain. We confess ourselves so much affected at this loss, that we had rather have been deprived of those ingenious supplements to *Petronius*, which Mr. *Naudot* has devised, or of all the works of the worthy Father ***. This loss, however, with respect to the elogium of people of fashion is the more supportable, as we find in Mr. *Helvetius's* book, all that can be said upon the extensive penetration, the magnanimity, the noble sentiments, and the fine taste, which usually distinguish men of fashion from other common mortals; a book, be it said, without prejudice or offense to any one, which, according to the disposition of the reader, is either the best or the worst book that has appeared in our century. It has a similar digression on mistresses and hounds; on which subjects the reader
who

who is inclined, may find more than sufficient information in the Earl of *Hamilton's* additions to the amorous history of the court of *Charles* the Second, King of *England*; and in the wonderful writings of a certain more modern statesman, whom, out of tenderness for his modesty we shall avoid naming. But the loss of the third digression we most heartily lament, because as we have been assured by one of the greatest connoisseurs in *Europe*, there is not at present any book in the world in which this interesting and rather intricate subject has been properly developed and thoroughly discussed. Unfortunately the chapter is most defective in this place. We may however conclude from a few words, which appear to belong to the end of this digression, that the author has assigned nine and thirty causes; and we must own our curiosity was excited to know what these nine and thirty causes were.

C H A P.

CHAP. V.

Moral Situation of our Hero.

THE writer of the old manuscript, from which we own that we have taken the greatest part of this history, triumphs, as it has been seen, on account of his having brought his hero away from a court with all his virtue untainted. This would certainly be something approaching to a miracle, if it really had been effected; but we apprehend he has said more, than strictly speaking he was capable of proving. If there are not some kinds of moral amulets, which counteract the infectious nature of a court air, in the same manner as the *Belemnites* are an antidote to poison, it seems rather incomprehensible to us that the tumult of an active life, the noxious vapours of flattery, which a favourite, willingly or unwillingly, incessantly inhales,—the necessity

sity of relaxing a little from the claims of wisdom and virtue, in order not to lose all;—and what is still worse than all this, the innumerable dissipations by which the soul is hurried from itself, and in attending to a number of lesser objects rushing impetuously by, forgets to attend to it's own situation,—it is inconceivable, I say, that all these circumstances should not have had some pernicious influence on the character of his soul and his heart. We must however confess, that the same thing happened to him on this occasion, that we see by daily experience usually happens to all other men. He was as little aware of this gradual, though not less certain influence, and the changes which it imperceptibly wrought in his soul; as a man in full health is sensible of the secret and insinuating disorders which the instability of the weather, trifling irregularities in living, the heterogeneous nature of his food, the slow working poison of the passions, hourly occasion

occasion in the animal machine. The changes which take place in our internal disposition must be considerable, in order to be noticed; and we commonly do not begin to perceive them clearly till we find it necessary to hesitate, and ask ourselves, whether we are still the same persons we were. It was probably on this account, that *Agathon*, without the least mistrust of himself, ascribed the progress which the revolution in his soul already begun at *Smyrna*, had made during his stay at *Syracuse*, entirely to the new or confirmed experience, he had so many opportunities of acquiring in this wide extensive sphere.

It is indisputably one of the greatest advantages, if not the only one, which a thinking man can acquire from living in the great world, if he is ever so happy as to retire from it,—that he has learnt to know that part of mankind. It is true there are as many strong objections to this method of gaining a knowledge of man-

mankind, as to that of acquiring it from history, from the writings of the poets, moralists, satyrists, and romance writers,—or to any other method. But on the other hand it must be allowed, that it is at least full as certain a method as any; and even that it is more so, if the person who pursues it is endowed with all the qualifications necessary for an observer. Nothing however can be more ridiculous than a coxcomb, who flatters himself that he has acquired a perfect knowledge of the world, and of mankind, after he has carried his figure about ten or fifteen years through all countries and courts, conquered some dozen of equivocal virtues, and collected as many insipid stories, or suspicious additions to the scandalous chronicle of every place he has passed through, with the assistance of which he can make the company laugh or yawn for two or three days.—Nothing can be more ridiculous than to see such a one casting his eye askance with

a stupid smile of contempt upon a man, who after a deep consideration of human nature for many years, occasionally judges of characters and manners, without having seen the seven towers, or been present at the marriage of the Doge of *Venice* with the Adriatic sea. We know not exactly what number there may be of such men of the world as belong to this class. This, however, appears evident, that a man of genius and enlightened understanding, for empiricism alone is here as insufficient, as in all other practical sciences, acquires by living in the great world, (so far as we take this word in its true sense) by the connection he must have in any considerable city with all kinds of ranks and characters;—by the frequent opportunities he has of seeing the persons he observes, in all manner of circumstances, both with and without the mask, of putting them to all kinds of trials;—and of discovering their ruling inclinations and secret motives, as well
by

by the use which others make of them, as by that which they endeavour to make of others;—it is evident, I say, that such a man with such advantages, acquires a more immediate, more extensive, and more just knowledge of men, than others who owe their theory only to historians, metaphysicians and moralists, three very uncertain kinds of teachers;—or who have made their observations merely on the microcosm of their own selves.

It has already been remark'd above, that *Agathon* at his appearance upon the stage, which he has now quitted again, had long ceased to think so sublimely and abstractedly of human nature, as at *Delphos*. It makes a considerable difference, whether a man lives among the statues of gods and heroes, or amongst men. But when he had enriched the observations he had already collected at *Athens* and *Smyrna*, by a nearer acquaintance with the great, and with courtiers, his opinion of the native beauty and dignity
of

of human nature, sank gradually so low, that he was sometimes tempted contrary to the dictates of his heart, (which he thought might as well be the persuasions of self-love and prejudice) to believe that all the elevated and noble things which the divine *Plato* had spoken or written about it, were anecdotes from another world. Imperceptibly the ideas which *Hippias* had given him of it, no more appeared so shocking, as when he placed himself in the garden of this voluptuous philosopher by moonlight, and meditated on the state of incorporeal spirits. At length this was carried so far, that these notions seemed to him sufficiently probable, to enable him to conceive how persons, who found in their own hearts nothing that could give them a higher opinion of their nature, might be induced, by a long connection with the world, to persuade themselves entirely of the truth of them.

It was possible for *Agathon* to go as far as this, without transgressing the bounds of that wise moderation, which ought always to make us slow and reserved in our decisions upon this important point, and all that relates to it. But at times, when he saw his finest expectations disappointed by the folly or wickedness of those with whom he was obliged to live, his chagrin threw a more than common gloom over his soul, and he went still a step farther. No, said he then to himself, men are not what I took them for, when I judged of them by myself, and of myself by the youthful feelings of a sensible heart, and by an innocence not yet put to the trial. My experience justifies the worst that *Hippias* said of them; and if they are no better, what reason have I to perplex myself, because they will not be influenced by principles, which have no kind of relation to their nature? Mine was the fault, who wanted to carve a *Mercury* out of a knotted fig-tree.

tree. Did he not apprize me, that I had nothing else to expect, if I meant to regulate the plan of my life according to my ideas? His prediction could not have been more exactly fulfilled.—Had I followed his principles, had I first at *Athens*, or afterwards here at *Syracuse*, conducted myself as *Hippias* would have done in my situation,—I should then have accomplished my designs; then should I have been happy,—and Heaven knows, whether the Sicilians would have suffered from it. This is now the second time, that *Philistus*, a true follower of the system of my Sophist, though he might not be able to make it appear so well connected or so plausible, has obtained the victory over wisdom and virtue.—What need have I of farther experience, to know, that he will as certainly triumph over another *Plato*, and over another *Agathon*?—How much did I relax from my principles, how much did I demean myself, when I saw the impossibi-

lity of raising those I was concerned with to a level with myself? What did this avail me?—I could not prevail upon myself to act in a base and mean manner, to become a flatterer, a pimp, a traitor to the real interests of the Prince and the nation,—and thus I lost at once the favour of the Prince, and the only reward I required for my services, the advantages which the country began to enjoy from my administration, because I could not consent to consider every thing that was useful, as equitable and proper.—O! certainly *Hippias*, thy ideas and maxims, thy morals, thy politics are founded upon the experience of all ages. When have men ever been otherwise? When have they ever esteemed virtue, but when they were in need of her assistance; and when has virtue not been odious to them, as soon as she came in competition with their passions?

THESE reflections brought our Hero to the very brink of the deep abyss, which

which lies between the system of virtue, and that of *Hippias*; but the first trembling look he cast upon it, was sufficient to make him retreat with horror. The notions of the essential difference between justice and injustice, and the ideas of moral beauty, had taken too deep a root in his heart, were too close interwoven and grown together with the tenderest fibres of it, to be extirpated by a cause entirely accidental, however powerfully it might work upon his imagination, or upon his passions. Virtue wanted no other advocate with him, but his own heart. At the very same instant that a too well founded misanthropy had represented mankind to him in a contemptible light, and, perhaps, as some mirrors do, much more odious than they really are, he felt with the most perfect certainty, that for the crown of the Persian monarch himself, he would neither have been *Hippias* nor *Philistus*. He felt, that if he should again be placed in the same

circumstances, he should act just as he had acted before, without being alarmed at any consequences that might ensue.

ON the contrary, it could not be otherwise, but that these reflections, which he had entirely given way to, since his disgrace, and particularly during his imprisonment, must entirely destroy the remains of that moral enthusiasm, with which we saw him fired when he fled from *Smyrna*. The thought of being employed for the happiness of mankind, for the universal good of the whole race, loses its powerful attraction, as soon as we think meanly of that race. The greatness of this enterprize is the very thing that makes it attractive,—and this naturally contracts itself, when we represent mankind to ourselves as a herd of creatures, the greatest part of whom confine their whole felicity, the only aim of all their endeavours, to the gratification of their corporeal wants, and are foolish enough, by a mean submission to a small
number

number of the worst among their own species, to put themselves almost always in such a situation, that they can acquire this mere animal felicity but seldom or for a short time, and even then only by importunity or artifice. Every animal seeks its own food,—digs itself a hole, or builds itself a nest,—propagates itself,—sleeps,—and dies. What do the greatest part of mankind more than this? The employment which distinguishes them most from other animals, is the care of cloathing themselves, and this, indeed, is the chief business of many millions: and must I (said *Agathon* to himself in one of his worst humours) must I sacrifice my tranquillity, my pleasures, my faculties, my existence to the care, that a particular herd of these noble creatures should eat more delicately, dwell more sumptuously, propagate themselves more frequently, cloath themselves more richly, sleep more softly than they did before, or than others of their species do?—

Is not this all they want ? And do they employ me for these purposes ? What inducement have I to do them these services ? Is there a single person amongst them, who in all his undertakings, has any nobler design than his own satisfaction ? Do I owe them any esteem or gratitude, because they work to supply my wants, or to minister to my pleasures ? I am indeed bound to pay them for it, this is all they want, and all they can require of me.

HEAVENS !—so methinks I hear some affecting voices exclaim—is it possible ? Could *Agathon* think so ? So meanly, so ignobly—so coldly, my fair ladies, so coldly ! And you will agree with me, that during a confinement of two or three months, which a man has drawn upon himself by great and noble sentiments alone, he had occasion enough to cool a little the heat of a generous enthusiasm.—But what will now become of our Hero's virtue ?—What is virtue without

without that charming fire, without that sublime inspiration, which raises man above the rest of his species, and elevates him even above himself, to the dignity of an universal benefactor, a guardian angel, an inferior divinity?—We allow it, virtue without this ethereal flame, is a thing of little value, of little splendor—“And how deplorable is it, to see our Hero’s virtue subdued, when it should shew itself in its greatest vigour!—What!—yield, because it meets with opposition?—Forsake the good cause, because we doubt, and, perhaps, without reason, the happy success of it? What else then is real virtue, but a perpetual contest with the passions, follies and vices—within and without us?”—Excellent!—and in *Bunyan’s* Progress so well discussed, Gentlemen, that there is no need of our saying more upon the subject here.

It is to be lamented, that our Hero had not supported his part better—But

to all appearances he never was a Hero,—and we have been to blame in appropriating so honourable a name to him.—

“Not quite so; he set out excellently well; he was a Hero, at the time that he tore himself from the urgent caresses of the seducing Priestess.”—That might have been owing to the bashful and shy innocence of beardless youth; and was he not then in love with the beautiful *Psyche*?—

“He deserved still the name of a Hero, when he had the courage to undertake the defense of a forsaken innocent man against a powerful party.” You might have done as much from ambitious motives,—or from an aversion to one of the enemies of the person you meant to protect,—or from some secret designs upon his wife,—or because you might have received forty thousand livres out of his chest?—And if you had been actuated by any of these motives, you would not have done an heroic action. That *Agathon* then had acted from noble sentiments,

ments, we know—from himself; and we have reason to give him credit for it—but he might have flattered himself with the greatest probability of brilliant success, and what a triumph was that for the ambition of a youth of twenty years of age? — “However, he certainly shewed himself a Hero, when with calmness and intrepidity he submitted to the unjust decree of banishment pronounced against him by the Athenians, and would rather suffer the utmost, than owe his enlargement to any meanness.”—He was equally a Hero, at that time when he could say to himself, “I did not reproach virtue, that she had drawn upon me the hatred and persecutions of the wicked; I felt that she was her own reward.”—He was indeed very noble at this instant; but we must not forget, that he was then in a very extraordinary situation, worked up to that highest pitch of enthusiasm for virtue, which makes a man forget for a time that he is a mortal. This kind of

heroism continues naturally no longer than the fit of enthusiasm lasts. *Agathon* was then conscious, as he imagined, of an untainted virtue. With what pride must such a consciousness have swelled his soul at the instant, that all *Athens* seemed to have conspired to disgrace him; in the moment that this very pride was the only thing that could counterbalance the whole weight of his misfortunes, and procured him the triumph, of making the masters of his fate feel all the superiority which virtue gave him over them? This kind of pride resembles in its effects the rage of a courageous man driven to despair. The certainty of death, to which he devotes himself, makes him perform exploits worthy of an immortal. But *Agathon* had not at that time, quite so much reason to be proud of his virtue. The very same enthusiastic disposition of mind, which had inspired him with the sentiments of a God, at his exile from *Athens*, had exposed him at *Smyrna* to the

the foibles of a common man. He did not now think so highly of himself, and as in similar circumstances, this heroic pride could no more come to his assistance, it must necessarily be changed into that kind of misanthropy, which extends itself over the whole species. In this instance, as in many others, the History of *Agathon* is the History of all men. We think greatly of human nature, so long as we think highly of ourselves; our contempt has always either individuals or small societies for its object; but as soon as we are degraded in our opinion of ourselves, our opinion of the whole race to which we belong, is sunk at the same time by an internal influence we cannot resist. We are surprized that we had not sooner perceiyed, that the follies and vices of those among whom we live, are defects of nature itself, to which every one is subject; defects which admit of degrees, are of one sort or another, and adapted to the peculiarities of time, circumstances.

cumstances, constitution and custom. The nearer we examine mankind, the greater reason have we for thinking so; and this way of thinking, at the same time that it gives us a certain low estimation of the whole race, induces us to be more indulgent to the failings and defects of the individuals, or the particular societies we are connected with. Thus while we lose something of our virtuous pride, which is precipitately and simply taken for virtue itself, we at the same time gain on the side of the most amiable and most necessary qualities, affability and moderation; qualities, which indeed have nothing brilliant in them, but have consequently more energy, and therefore make us fitter to live among creatures who stand in need of them every instant.

It is a common and frequently reprehensible failing of the human race, that they prefer the miraculous to the natural, and the splendid, to that which does not strike

strike the eye so much, though more useful and lasting. This method of judging of the value of things is never more fallacious, than when it is employed on moral objects. The sublimity of a man's ideas and feelings, and the fluency of speaking a certain language of inspiration, which (like the language of the Gods in *Homer*) gives other names to all things, without making them in the least otherwise than what they really are under their common names, usually induces us to think very highly of the excellence of his character. But the conclusion we draw in this instance is as false as the prejudice many persons entertain against a quiet and modest virtue, which without discovering itself by solemn parade, high flown ideas, pretended privileges from the imperfections of human nature, and inexorable severities against them, seems to promise less, merely in order to perform more. This being previously stated, we may perhaps with good reason affirm,
that

that our hero's virtue might reap great advantages in several respects from the new change that took place in his way of thinking. But we will own, that what he gained on one side by this, he lost on the other. The ideas we form to ourselves of our own nature, have an absolute influence over all the rest of our ideas. So false, so ridiculous and childish it is, to imagine as many people do, that man is the principal figure in the whole creation, and that all the rest exist only for his pleasure;—so natural, on the contrary, it is to suppose, from the particular system of his own notions, that he is so. In this little world, he is and continues, voluntarily or involuntarily, the center,—the Hero of the piece to which every thing is referred, and by whose happiness or misery every thing is determined. All is great, important and interesting, if the principal person is of consequence, and has a great part to act; but if a *Scapin*

or

or a *Harlequin* is the Hero, what can the whole piece be, but a Farce ?

WE may, probably, still remember the doubts in which *Agathon* was involved, when he quitted the enchanting coast of *Ionia*. He had there, perhaps, experienced to his advantage, that the ideas which had taken possession of his youthful mind in the groves of *Delphos*, and had been more deeply ingrafted in it by the instructions and conversation of the divine *Plato* at *Athens*, had been rather prejudicial than useful to him on any occasion, where he had given himself up with more perfect security to their influence and protecting power. At length these ideas, through a just suspicion of their reality, were so imperceptibly and easily succeeded by others of an entirely opposite nature, that he was not aware of the change before it was completely established. *Agathon* had not then time to reconcile these doubts to himself; he imagined, indeed, or rather earnestly wished,

wished, that what was really true in his former principles, might very well coincide with his newly acquired ideas.—But he perceived not yet with sufficient clearness, how this could be?—At first sight indeed he perceived a certain void, at which he was the more alarmed, as he had little inclination to follow the example of most people, who when they find themselves thus embarrassed, fill up the chasms with the first thing that comes to hand, whether it be straw, clay, or rags. His former favourite ideas however had yet at that time a strong hold upon his heart, and he satisfied himself with their suggestions, in hope that as soon as he was in a more quiet situation, it would be easy for him again perfectly to reconcile his head with his heart. But the scene of business and the dissipations which had engrossed all his time at *Syracuse*, had obliged him to defer this important task so long, that the new difficulties which were perpetually starting up, made it

it infinitely more troublesome than at first. The ridiculous and absurd side of men's opinions, passions and customs, is generally the first that presents itself to a man of wit and understanding, who has not the leisure to consider them attentively.

Agathon had accustomed himself imperceptibly to view things in this light, to which he was already disposed by the natural vivacity and quickness of his genius. The Syracusans, whose character was a mixture of that of the *Athenians* and *Corinthians*, or a composition of the most contrary qualities any people could possibly have;—and a court, such as that of *Dionysius* was,—supplied him so abundantly with comic characters, images and occurrences that the contrast between the present and the former tone of his mind, (if I may be allowed this technical expression) must have grown stronger from day to day. The *Oromasdes* and *Arimanius* of the antient Persians cannot be represented as more mortal enemies to
each

each other, than the spirit of ridicule, and the spirit of enthusiasm; and the natural antipathy between these two dispositions is not a little increased by their being both equally disposed to exceed the bounds of moderation. The spirit of enthusiasm sees all things in a strong and awful light; that of ridicule, in a trifling and contemptible one. Nothing is more common than for the first to be carried so far, that every thing which bears the name of jest and raillery, appears reprehensible; nothing is more usual, than for the latter to make those very things the chief subjects for joke and laughter, which others treat with the greatest seriousness.

To this we may add, that the light and facetious turn has for a long time been peculiar to courts,—and that the pretended Academicians, or philosophers, in particular of *Dionysius's* court, except *Aristippus* alone, represented a set of tragicomical buffoons, who seemed to be chosen

sen on purpose to make the sublime sciences, of which they declared themselves the Priests and Mystagogues, as contemptible as they were themselves.—All these circumstances taken together, will make us less surpris'd that our Hero should not at length gradually acquire a disposition, which no man would probably have expected in him, at the time when he was waiting for the apparitions of Deities in the grotto of the Nymphs,—or when he rejected the principles, promises and friendship of the sage *Hippias*, with such warm indignation.—No man, but the most accurate observer of the human heart, would have imagined, that the greater part of his former ideas, of the reality of which he began to doubt even at *Smyrna*, should now appear quite chimerical and ridiculous to himself,—and that those ideas, the objects of which must still continue to be respected by him, being now abstractedly considered in the irregular form as they are lessened, spoiled, mixed

mixed or travestied in men's imaginations, appeared fit for nothing but to amuse.

SUCH of our readers as are given to reflection, will now more clearly comprehend why we have scrupled giving our approbation to the author of the Greek manuscript, in his too favourable opinion of the present moral situation of our Hero. We cannot but be aware, that this situation is dangerous for his virtue, and the more so, because from a certain good humour and vivacity, and other appearances of full health, in such circumstances a man usually persuades himself that he is in his natural situation. Not that we should be so much displeased at seeing our Hero (for whom, notwithstanding all his failings, we have as great a regard as if he were a Sir *Charles Grandison*) in a disposition which might lead him entirely to get rid of all kind of enthusiasm;—for whatever great and good things we may say in his favour, it is still experi-

certainly better to be in health, and to experience no transports, than to hear the harmony of the spheres, or be affected with a burning fever;—yet we have reason to fear, that the too great relaxation, which in the soul as well as in the body, usually succeeds an inordinate degree of tension, may at least become as prejudicial to his heart, as the amiable enthusiasm of which we have seen him possessed, might be to his reason. The new turn which his mind had taken at *Syracuse*, would rather be a matter of indifference to us, if the change had been confined merely to speculative ideas, or to the distribution of light and shade in his disposition; but if he should by this alteration become less upright, less a lover of truth, less sensible to the good of the human race, less magnanimous and beneficent, less disposed to partake of the happiness of any particular society, (without which the pretended universal sociableness of certain people is mererodomate,

montade, or at best but a species of Quixotism) if it should make him less disposed to friendship, the favourite inclination of fine souls.—Permit me, ye rigid Antiplatonists, by whom every thing which will not admit of a geometrical demonstration, is called a chimæra, permit me to go a little farther.—If these refined thoughts which elevate the soul, which are so benevolent, and so advantageous to virtue,—if these are designed for a greater sphere than this animal life, for a nobler mode of existence, for objects of higher excellence, and for a more perfect state of action than our present; ---and if the inspiring, though visionary prospects, which this best of all thoughts presents to us;---if these I say, should have no farther charm, no farther influence over his soul;—O! *Agathon, Agathon!* then woulst thou deserve neither hatred from us, nor an unmerciful censure, nor an exulting joy over thy disgrace, but—compassion.

THE

THE disposition of mind in which we have seen him in this chapter, seems not entirely calculated to remove our apprehensions for him on this score. The ideas, opinions and decisions of a man are so uncertain, the circumstances, the particular point of view in which they appear to us, the society in which we live, a thousand little circumstances, which when single escape our notice, have so much power over this inexplicable, capricious, contradictory thing, our soul!—that we would not have answered for the fate of our Hero, if with such a disposition of mind, he had chanced to fall into company with such men as *Hippias* and *Alcibiades*, or had gone back into the great world at *Smyrna*. But luckily we are on the point of seeing him with persons, who will reconcile him again to mankind, and impart again to his languid heart that vivifying warmth, without which virtue is a mere speculation: that warmth which indeed furnishes an

inexhaustible fund for the most acute reflections; but through the several chymical processes it undergoes from too much refined reasoning, becomes so abstracted, so refined, so delicate a thing, that one cannot make any use of it.

How much soever our Hero's imagination might have been cooled; however uncertain, preposterous, and fanciful the doctrine of spirits, and the metaphysical politics of his friend *Plato* might appear; how ridiculous soever his own extravagancies in the state of enchantment in which he formerly was might seem; however meanly he thought of mankind in general, and however determined he was not to suffer himself any longer to be deceived by those fine fancies, as he now called them, by those ideas of being serviceable to his own species—yet he was not yet gone so far as to lose that tender sensibility of the soul, that deep rooted propensity to ideal excellence, which had been the secret origin of his former

former inspiration, and of the manifold enthusiasms, enchantments and raptures, through the magical labyrinth of which his disposition, under various circumstances had led him. The stolen glances, which he yet so wistfully cast on the scenes of his happy youth; the image of the amiable *Psyche*, which amidst all the changes that had taken place in his soul, had not lost any thing of its lustre; the recollection of that pure, inexpressible, almost divine pleasure, which overflowed his heart, when he had it still in his power to make others happy; and when the purity of this godlike enjoyment was not yet clouded and obscured by any experience of the ingratitude and wickedness of men.—These images, to which he so readily gave himself up—which in his dreams were so often and in such lively colours represented to his agitated soul—the sighs, the wishes, he sent forth after these beloved disappearing shadows—all these symptoms are securi-

ties to us, that he still is *Agathon*; that the alteration in his ideas and opinions, the new theories which had now begun to unfold themselves in his soul, of all those things that deserve to be objects of our researches, or become so from vanity and curiosity, had not yet laid hold of the nobler part of his heart.—In short, we may yet hope, that from the strife between the two opposite and hostile spirits, by which his whole internal frame has for some time been agitated, confused and thrown into ferment, we shall at length see a beautiful harmony of wisdom and virtue produced, in the same manner as according to the system of the antient oriental Sages, this beautiful world is said to have sprung from the contest between light and darkness.



AGATHON.

B O O K XI.

C H A P T E R I.

Apology for the Greek Author.

HERETO the history of our
H Hero, at least in the most es-
sential points, appears so con-
sonant to the ordinary course of nature,
and to the most exact rules of probabi-
lity, that we see no reason to call the
truth of it in question. But, in this
eleventh Book, we must own, the au-
thor seems to have wandered out of this
world, which, to speak impartially of
the matter, has at all times been nothing
better than a *working-day world*, as *Shake-*

spear somewhere calls it: he seems, I say, to have strayed a little into the land of ideas, of miracles, of events which fall out just as one could wish them, and indeed to say all at once, into the land of beautiful souls, and the Utopian republic. It remains with our readers, to give him what credit they please on this score; we on our parts do not concern ourselves with the matter. Our views are already attained, and the fortunate or unfortunate circumstances, which may yet happen to *Agathon*, have nothing to do with them. Yet we think that all benevolent persons, who gradually become interested in the fate of the Hero of such a history, and who desire that every thing should end to the satisfaction of all parties, with discoveries, renewal of acquaintance, lucky recovery of lost friends, and a few marriages; will be pleased with the author for making his Hero, after he has gone through a sufficient number of good and bad adventures, at last happy for the remainder

mainder of his days. It may be, that the author of the Greek manuscript, has in this point given way to his good nature; for in reality, it appears to be a mark of a hard and cruel heart, which finds a pleasure in the anguish and tears of his innocent readers, when a man has taken all the pains he can, to prejudice us in favour of the Hero or Heroine of a surprizing history, merely to bring us at last to as calamitous a catastrophe, as a melancholy misanthropic imagination can possibly conceive, and to overwhelm us with distress the more sensibly felt, and less easily endured, as brought upon us by the arbitrary will of the writer. But our author, who has nobler ideas, appears to us to have had another view, which without being guilty of greater improbabilities, he could not so well accomplish as by this connection of happy, though not very probable circumstances, in which he places his Hero in this book.—And what kind of a view might

this be?—I will inform you, ladies and gentlemen, plainly and without circumlocution, though I cannot but be apprehensive, that the uncommon frankness, which I have shewn you in the whole course of this work, may be taken ill by some of you.—Our author was desirous of avoiding the reproach which *Horace*, in that well known verse

Amphora cæpit

Institui—currente rota cur urceus exit?

metaphorically gives to those poets, in whose works the end agrees not with the beginning. After having conveyed his Hero through as many various situations, as he thought necessary to put his virtue to the trial, to refine, and bring it to a proper state, he was willing that the great expectations which his youth, and his first outset in the world had excited, should not be disappointed; but that at the last he should be the model of as wise and virtuous a man, as we can wish to see under the sun, or can possibly expect

pect from the nature of things. The enthusiasm, which so peculiarly disposed his Hero to aspire to an uncommon degree of moral perfection, at the same time that it raised his virtue, prevented his being so cautious, as a man should be, in order not to be deceived, by himself and by others, with the most sublime ideas, and most noble sentiments. A way of thinking, which seemed to elevate him to a rank of beings superior to common men, exposed him to their envy, their malicious censure, their snares and persecutions; and, what was the most dangerous circumstance for his virtue, made him imperceptibly forget, that in reality he himself was neither more nor less than a man. The experience he at length gained on these points, opened his eyes, and dissipated part of the enchantment; he learnt to know himself better, but was not yet sufficiently acquainted with the world. A new and great stage on which he was placed, re-

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moved

moved this defect. A wide extended and manifold experience moderated his too ideal method of thinking, and convinced him, that like the magnanimous, virtuous and brave knight of *la Mancha*, (that instructive image of the foibles and failings of the human mind!) he had taken windmills for giants, inns for enchanted castles, and country maids for divine Dulcineas. He grew more wise, but it was at the expence of his virtue. The enchantment becoming too strong for his imagination, his desire of performing great actions, of preventing all injustice in the world, of waging perpetual war against the enemies of universal felicity, and of making men happy whether they would or no, was proportionably diminished.

Now, will any one say to me, since our Hero was in this kind of disposition, and every thing well considered, this must have happened one way or other; for the noblest, the most amiable enthusiasm,

fiasm, if it lasts too long, and will not be expelled even by the Iangesian mule drivers, at length becomes a folly, what would, or what would our author do more with him? Should he make a misanthropic hermit of him? For such a purpose, his mind was too much enlightened, and his heart too weak—or too tender—or too good, just as you please. Besides, our author, who was a Grecian, and must at least have been cotemporary with *Aleiphron* (as the learned have observed, without our taking notice of it) might not probably have those high ideas of the excellence of solitary virtue, which have been entertained from the miraculous periods of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries down to our philosophical times; ideas, which to all appearance will still be long supported in many countries. To bring him back again into the wide world, would be doing nothing more, than to expose him to the most manifest danger of being confirmed in his

antiplatonic way of thing, by new and repeated experience; and to deprive him gradually, in the society of witty and amiable persons, who have either no principle, or at least none better than those of the sage *Hippias*, of those precious remains of his former virtue, which he had still fortunately brought with him out of the pestilential air of the great world. In such circumstances he might probably have become a kind of middle character between wisdom and folly, rather a ridiculous than an odious compound of penetration and scepticism, of real and arbitrary ideas, of superstition and incredulity, of good and evil passions, customs and caprices, of virtues and vices equally deceitful. In short, he might have become as excellent a kind of creature, as nearly the generality of us are, whether we know it—and if we know it, whether we confess it—or not.

IN such circumstances, and when (as it has been said) it was the author's design,

sign, to make a virtuous wife man of his Hero, and in a way too, that we might clearly comprehend, how such a man—so born—so educated—with such abilities and dispositions—with such a particular turn of them—after such a series of experience, of discoveries and changes—in such fortunate circumstances—in such a place, and at such a time—in such society—in such a climate—with such food, (for even this has a more powerful influence on wisdom and virtue, than many moralists imagine)—with such a rule of diet—in short, under all such particular situations, as *Agathon* has hitherto been, and will hereafter be placed in—how such a man I say might have been as wise and as virtuous as our Hero, and (those who are not accustomed to think, may believe it or not) under the same, or under similar circumstances, such a man might even become so at this day. If this, I say, was his design, he really had no other way left, than to place his Hero in
this

this chain of fortunate incidents, which to his own astonishment, he will now soon experience. Such a concurrence indeed of happy events, is too uncommon to be probable. But, how shall a poor author act, who, when every thing is well considered, finds but one single way open by which he can extricate himself, and that an adventurous one? A man gets out any way he can, even by jumping out of window. The little hero of the *Queen of Golconda* is not the first who has been obliged to have recourse to this method; and without such a leap, *Julius Caesar*, as lord of the world, (an expression, which however common, is really ridiculous enough) would not have had the satisfaction of proceeding in triumph through the streets of *Rome* to the capitol.

Thus much in justification of our author; whether it can answer that purpose, we leave to the critics to determine. But let the criticism turn out as it may, the publisher, as he has already declared,

declared, is not in the least concerned in it. The views he had in reducing the old papers, which accidentally fell in his hands, into an abridgment, in the form and manner observed in the ten preceding books, are already answered. It appears unnecessary, to explain this point more clearly. So much however we can say, that he never thought of writing a novel, as many persons, notwithstanding the title and the preface, may have taken in their head to believe—And as this book, in as much as the publisher is concerned in it, is ~~no~~ novel, nor ought to be one, so he cares very little about what is called the catastrophe, and whether the author of the manuscript has managed it dexterously, or hurried it in an unskilful and abrupt manner.

C H A P. II.

*The People of Tarentum. Character of an
amiable old Man.*

ARCHYTAS, by whose powerful interposition *Agathon* was delivered from the hands of his enemies at *Syracuse*, had been an intimate friend of his father *Stratonicus*. The two families had been connected from antient times, by the ties of hospitality, which are said to have been held very sacred among the Greeks. The extensive reputation which the philosopher of *Tarentum* had acquired, as the most worthy among the disciples of *Pythagoras*, as a man well versed in the secrets of nature, and in the mechanic arts, as a wise politician, as an experienced, and at the same time a fortunate General, and what crowns all these advantages, as an honest man in the fullest sense of the word, had long rendered

dered the name of *Archytas* respectable to our Hero. To this may be added, that his younger son *Critolaus*, having passed two or three years in *Agathon's* house, at the time of his highest fortune, and having been treated with all public demonstrations of friendship, had conceived such an attachment for him, as in great souls, (for there were still great souls at that time) ends only with life. This friendship indeed had been interrupted a considerable time by accidental circumstances, and by *Agathon's* residence at *Smyrna*, but it was renewed immediately after he had taken the resolution to live with *Dionysius*, and from that period it had been carefully kept up. *Agathon* during his administration had frequently taken advice from the sage and experienced *Archytas*; and the several connections which the people of *Tarentum* and the *Syracusans* had with each other, especially in point of commerce, had often afforded him an opportunity of doing service to the *Tarentines*.

rentines. From all these circumstances we may easily judge, that he was the less able to resist the affectionate and pressing invitations of his friend *Critolaus*, as the duties of gratitude to his deliverer seemed not to leave him at liberty to take any other motives into consideration, in the choice of his residence.

HE could not in fact have chosen a place better adapted to his future views, than *Tarentum*. This republic was then exactly in the situation which every patriotic republican would wish his own to be in—too circumscribed to form ambitious projects, and too great to fear the ambition of their neighbours, or their endeavours to aggrandize themselves; too weak to find it's advantage in other enterprizes, so much as in the arts of peace; yet strong enough to maintain itself against every enemy whose power was not exorbitantly superior; and such enemies a small republic seldom has. *Archytas*, during the course of more than thirty

thirty years in which he had held the chief authority in the republic, had so well accustomed the Tarentines to the wise laws he had made for them, that they seemed rather to be governed by the influence of morality, than by the authority of the legislation. The Tarentines for the most part were mechanics and tradesmen. The sciences and fine arts were in no very particular estimation among them; neither were they held in contempt. This indifference preserved the Tarentines from the errors and extravagancies of the Athenians; among whom, every man, down to the tanner and shoemaker, would be a philosopher and an orator, a man of wit and a connoisseur. They were a good kind of people, simple in their manners, diligent, laborious, regular, enemies to pomp and profusion, † humane

† The character here given of the Tarentines, is widely different from that they had in the time of King Pyrrhus, and which they maintained till the loss of their liberty. But it is to be observed, that Archytas and Pyrrhus lived at least at the distance of eighty years from each other.

humane and hospitable to strangers, averse to affectation, refinement, and extravagance in all things, and for the same reason lovers of the natural and the solid;—a people who considered more the matter than the form, and who could not conceive that a dish made of Corinthian brass, however exquisitely wrought, could be better than a coarse one made of silver, or that a fool could be amiable, because he was handsome. They loved their freedom, as a wife, not as a mistress, without passion, and without jealousy; they had a reasonable confidence in those to whom they intrusted the care of the state; but they required that the confidence should be merited. The spirit of industry, the most innocent and beneficent of any we are acquainted with in this sublunary sphere, which inspired this happy and estimable people, made each individual trouble himself less about his neighbour's affairs at *Tarentum*, than is usual in most small cities. Provided they

they did not incur scandal by any illegal action, or by any behaviour notoriously inconsistent with morality, every man might live as he pleased. All these things taken together, made in our opinion a very good kind of republican character; and it would have been difficult for *Agathon* to find out a republic better adapted to moderate the dislike he had conceived against this sort of government. Without doubt these people had their failings as well as others; but the wise *Archytas*, under whose administration the national character of the Tarentines had first taken a firm and determined form, knew how to manage so well these defects, which may be called the constitutional faults of a people, that being blended with their virtues, they almost ceased to be defects. —This is a necessary and perhaps the greatest art of a legislator; and we take this opportunity of recommending a more accurate examination and analysis of it to those who feel a strong impulse to lend their
their

their assistance towards a solution of the following problem; namely, which legislation under given circumstances is likely to prove the best? A problem, which lilliputian souls alone consider as chimerical; the solution of which, however difficult, is still possible, and may probably be reserved for future times.

Agathon no sooner fixt his eyes on the Italian shore, than he discovered his friend *Critolaus*, who with a train of the noblest youths of *Tarentum* had hastened—to meet him; in order to conduct him in a kind of friendly triumph, into a city, which esteemed itself honoured that such a man as *Agathon* should chuse to fix his residence there rather than in any other place. The agreeable air of this coast, surrounded with a serene sky, the view of one of the most beautiful countries under the sun, and the still more delightful sight of a friend, by whom he was beloved even to enthusiasm, made our Hero forget in one instant all the misfortunes

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he had experienced in *Sicily*, and throughout his whole life. A gladsome presaging expectation of the happiness which waited for him in this before untrodden land, diffused an inexpressible sensation of delight throughout his whole frame. The undoubted joy which seemed at once to take possession of all his senses, was not that peculiar enchanting sensation which the beauties of nature, and the consciousness of being actuated by her purest impulses, had made him experience in his youth.—It was not that sensation, that bloom of sensibility, that tender sympathy with every thing that lives, or seems to live;—it was not that spirit of joy which is breathed from all objects; that magic varnish which covers them, and makes us melt in silent rapture, at a sight, which ten years later would scarce even slightly affect us;—no,—this envied prerogative of our earliest youth loses itself imperceptibly as we advance in life, and can no more be found.—But, it was something

something similar to this; his soul seemed to be cleared from all the gloominess of his immediately preceding situation, and to be prepared for those tender impressions, it was to experience in this new period of his life.

ONE of his most happy hours, as he was often used afterwards to affirm, was that, in which he began a personal acquaintance with *Archytas*. This venerable old man was indebted to his constitution, and to that regularity which had been the distinguishing mark of his character from his youth, for the advantage of having preserved his powers in a state of vigour uncommon at his time of life. An advantage however not by much so uncommon among the ancient Greeks, as amongst most of the European nations of our time; with whom it has begun to be fashionable to lavish away the first half of their life so inconsiderately, that in the other half, they are obliged to call the most secret powers of medicine to their assistance,

assistance, in order to enable them to protract from one day to another a precarious languid state between existence and non-existence. How much soever our Hero's imagination was cooled, he could not but feel something he was not able to account for in the mixture of majesty and grace, which was diffused through the whole person of this amiable old man;—and he could not but feel this the more sensibly, the stronger the contrast was between this object, and those to which his eyes had for a considerable time past, been accustomed to.—And why could he not do otherwise? The reason is plain; for this ideal something was not in his imagination, but in the object itself. Represent to yourself a tall majestic man, whose appearance at once gives the idea, that he is destined to govern others; and in whom, notwithstanding his grey hairs, you may still discover the features of a handsome person.—You may without doubt remember to

Vol. IV.

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have ♦

have seen such a one ; but this is not all. Represent to yourself, that this man throughout the whole course of his life has been distinguished for his virtue ; that a long course of years has matured his virtue into wisdom ;—that the unclouded serenity of his soul, the tranquillity of his mind, the general benevolence with which he is inspired, the calm consciousness of a life spent in innocence and good actions, is displayed in his eyes, and over all the features of his face, with a stamp of truth, with an expression of silent greatness and dignity, the power of which a man must feel whether he will or no ;—this is perhaps what you have not yet seen ;—this is the ideal something I meant, which our Hero conceived and could not account for.—But do you remember the good old Mrs. *Shirley* ?—whom for my part, however charming or even imaginary the *Harriet Byrons*, and their rivals may be, I should on some occasions prefer to a whole seraglio of *Harriets*, *Clementinas*,

mentinas, and *Emilias*, including even the *Charlottes*, *Olivias*, and all other Goddesses of the same stamp, together with the beautiful *Maguelone*:—Well; a picture of this same old lady, drawn by a *Van Dyke* (if such a painter can be found) would make a closet-piece, for which I would freely give up all the *Venusses*, and *Graces* of *Vanloo* and *Bouchers*, how little soever I might object to them. A picture of *Archytas*, by the pencil of an *Apelles* (if there was an *Apelles* in his time) would be it's companion. *Agathon* had only to behold him, to be convinced that he had at last found a truly wise man; a man, who would only seem to be what he really was; and in whom the most penetrating eye could not discern any thing which one would have wished to be otherwise. This was a character he had long wished to find, but he had never yet imagined that he had found it, without being afterwards, one way or other convinced of his

mistake. Nature seemed to have intended to shew in *Archytas*, that wisdom is no less her gift, than genius; and that although it is not impossible to reform a bad disposition by art, and from a *Silenus*, if such is the will of Heaven, to make a *Socrates* (a victory however which art very seldom obtains) yet it is given to nature alone to produce that happy temperature of the elements man is composed of, which by a concurrence of as many fortunate circumstances, may at last be raised to that perfect harmony of all human powers and actions, in which wisdom and virtue are concentrated.

Archytas had never had either a glowing imagination, or violent passions; a certain strength, which characterized the mechanism of his head and his heart, had from his youth moderated the effect of external objects upon his soul. The impressions he acquired from them, were clear and precise enough, to supply his understanding with real images, and to prevent

prevent the confusion which usually reigns in the minds of those whose too relaxed fibres can only receive weak and languid impressions from objects. But these impressions were not so lively, nor accompanied with any such violent agitations, as in those persons, who, by tender organs and more seducing senses destined for the enthusiastic arts of the Muses, must purchase at a dear rate the doubtful superiority of a magic imagination, and a heart made highly sensible by the tyranny of the passions, to which it is more or less subject. It was owing to the want of this advantage, as shining as it is little worth envying, that *Archytas* had scarce any trouble to keep peace and order in his internal disposition; that, instead of being governed by his ideas and feelings, he was always master over them, and knew not the mistakes of the head and heart, but from the experience of others; mistakes, which the enthusiastic tribe of heroes, poets and virtuosos of all

kinds can speak of from their own. From hence it happened also, that the Pythagorean philosophy, in the principles of which he had been educated—that very same philosophy, which in the brains of so many others produces a singular mixture of truth and illusion,—was formed in his mind, by reflection and experience, into a system of ideas equally simple, useful and practical;—a system, which seemed to come nearer to truth than any other; which ennobled human nature, without puffing it up, and opened its views into better worlds, without totally abstracting it from this, or making it useless in its present state;—a system, which by the most sublime and best ideas, our soul is capable of forming of God, of the constitution of the world, and of its own nature and destiny, purifies and moderates its passions, improves its sentiments;—and (what is not so trifling an advantage, as nine hundred and ninety-nine men of a thousand imagine)—a system,

tem, which delivers the soul from the bondage of those popular ideas which deform it, which make it little, mean, timid, deceitful and servile; ideas, which drive away and stifle every noble inclination, every great thought, and on this very account are zealously entertained by political and religious Demagogues among the greatest part of the human race, from views, which those gentlemen have reason to conceal.

THE most convincing proof of the goodness of the philosophy of the wise *Archytas*, in our opinion, is the moral character which is attributed to him by the unanimous testimony of the antients. This proof, it is true, does not agree with a system of metaphysical speculations; but the philosophy of *Archytas* was entirely practical. The example of so many great souls, who had miscarried in their efforts to go beyond the limits of human reason, would not probably have made him wiser in this respect, if he had

had more vanity and less coolness. But, such as his disposition was, he gave up these sort of speculations to his friend *Plato*, and confined his examination of objects merely intellectual entirely to those simple truths, which common sense can attain, which reason confirms, and whose beneficial influence on the happiness of our particular system, as well as on the general good, is alone sufficient to demonstrate their excellence. We may therefore with undeniable certainty from the life of such a man, infer the goodness of his principles. *Archytas* united all domestic and civil virtues, with that most excellent and most divine of all virtues, which is founded on no other relation than that general chain with which nature connects all beings. He enjoyed the uncommon happiness, that the irreproachable innocence of his public and private life, the modesty with which he knew how to soften the splendor of so much merit, and the moderation with which he exerted

exerted his power, had at length so completely disarmed envy, and so entirely gained him the hearts of his fellow citizens, that (notwithstanding he had retired from affairs on account of his great age) he was considered as the soul of the state, and the father of his country as long as he lived. In this quality he maintained an authority which wanted nothing but the outward marks of regal dignity. No despot ever ruled with more unlimited sway over the bodies of his slaves, than this venerable old man did over the hearts of a free people; nor was ever the best of fathers more affectionately beloved by his children. Happy people! to be governed by an *Archytas*, and to know so well how to estimate all the value of that felicity!—And still more happy *Agathon*, who in such a man found a protector, a friend, and a second father.

C H A P. III.

An unexpected Discovery.

ARCHYTAS had two sons, whose emulative virtue made the uncommon and deserved happiness of his old age complete. This amiable family lived together in a harmony, the sight of which transported our Hero into the happy simplicity and innocence of the golden age. He had never seen so beautiful an order, so perfect an union, so regular and excellent a whole, as the house of *Archytas* represented. All the domestics, even to the lowest class, were worthy of such a master. Every one seemed exactly suited to the place he occupied. *Archytas* had no slaves; the free, but discreet behaviour of his servants, the alacrity, the exactness, the emulation with which they did their duty; the confidence that was placed in them, were proofs that he had found out the means of inspiring even these

these raw and mechanical souls with sentiments of honour and virtue. The manner in which they served, and the manner in which they were treated, appeared to efface what was ignoble and debasing in their situation. They were proud of serving so excellent a master; and there was not one of them who would have accepted of his freedom even with the most advantageous proposals, if he had been obliged to give up the happiness of being a domestic of *Archytas*. Content enlightened every countenance; but there was not the least trace of that mean pride which commonly distinguishes the lazy tribe of servants in great houses. Every thing was here in motion; but without that tumultuous noise which proclaims the heavy going of the machine. The house of *Archytas* resembled the internal mechanism of the animal body, in which every thing is employed in continual labour, without our

being sensible of any motion, while the external parts are at rest.

Agathon still continued in that agreeable astonishment, which must increase every instant, during the first hours he passed in so singular a house; when he was at once, and without being prepared for it by the least internal presage, surprized with a discovery which had very nearly persuaded him that all he saw was a dream.

The Gynæcium among the Greeks, we know was commonly as inaccessible to strangers, as the Harem among the people of the East. But *Agathon* was not treated as a stranger in the house of *Archytas*. This amiable old man therefore, after they had conversed together about a couple of hours, which seemed very short to our Hero, conducted him in company with his two sons into the inmost recess of the house, where the female part of the family resided, in order, as he said, not to deprive his daughters any longer

longer of a pleasure, in the expectation of which they had so long rejoiced. Represent to yourself how much he must have been astonished, when the first person who caught his eye as he entered, was his *Psyche*!—Situations such as these are better painted than described.—This apparition was so unexpected, that he at first thought himself deceived by an accidental resemblance of this young lady to his beloved *Psyche*. He started; he looked at her again; and if he had even been unwilling to trust any longer to his eyes, what passed in his heart would have been sufficient to clear his doubts. Yet it scarce appeared credible to him, that after so long an absence, and with so little probability of ever seeing her again, he should be so fortunate as to find her in the Gynæcium of his friend at *Tarentum*! Another thought, which in these circumstances was very natural, increased his confusion, and prevented him from giving himself up to that joy, which a sight,

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as much desired as it was little expected, diffused over his soul. *Psyche* did not appear in character of a slave in this house; what else could he therefore suppose, but that she must be the wife of one of the sons of *Archytas*? It is true indeed, he might as well have imagined her to be his newly discovered daughter; but in such circumstances our imagination is ever led to suppose what we most apprehend. He had in reality guessed the matter at once; *Psyche* had been the wife of *Critolaus* a few months.

OUR readers may now perceive, what a fine opportunity this little incident gives us for pathetic descriptions and tragical scenes—What a situation!—After a long and painful separation, unexpectedly to find again the object of the tenderest affections of his heart, his first love; but, then to find her again, only to see her in another's arms, and what precludes all right of complaining, of being enraged or breathing revenge in the arms of
one's

one's dearest friend!—Luckily for our Hero!—and for the author—the persons who at this instant were witnesses of his astonishment, were not so passionately fond of pathetic scenes, as to be capable of taking pleasure in his torment. They only wished to have the satisfaction of surprizing him; but it would have been cruel to make him go through a tragical scene, how fortunate soever the catastrophe might at last have turned out. The tender *Psyche* beheld his confusion for a few moments; but could not contain herself any longer. She flew to him with open arms, and while with tears of joy she bedewed his glowing cheeks, he heard himself called by a name, which justified her tenderest caresses, even in the presence of a husband.

HAD the love with which she inspired him in the groves of *Delphos* been less Platonic, the discovering a sister in the beloved of his heart, would not have been so joyful to him as it was. But it
may

may be remembered, that their love, however infinitely tender it was, resembled rather that kind of affection which nature excites between brothers and sisters of a similar disposition, than that which is founded on the magic power of another instinct, from the ardent symptoms of which their love had been always exempt. They had already at that time found a particular satisfaction in imagining, that their souls at least were nearly related to each other, though they had not sufficient reasons, how much soever they might wish it, to ascribe the innocent passion they felt for each other, to the effect of the natural sympathy of consanguinity. *Agathon* therefore was happier than he could have expected to be, when after the explanations that were made to him, he could no longer doubt of recovering in *Psyche* a sister, whom from the account before given him by his father he supposed to be dead. He was still the more happy, as by her means he
be-

became connected with a family, in whose favour his heart was already so much prepossessed, that the thought of being ever separated from them would have become insupportable to him. Now, my fair readers, he wanted nothing more to make him as happy as a mortal could be, than that *Archytas* should have some amiable daughter or niece, to whom we might marry him. But unluckily for him *Archytas* had no daughter; and if he had any nieces, which we cannot positively affirm, they were either already married, or not calculated to banish the image of the beautiful *Danae*, and the recollections of his former felicity, which grew daily more and more lively.

THESE recollections had already begun to take possession of his heart in his melancholy hours at *Syracuse*. The sorrow with which his soul had been clouded and depressed in the last period of his life at court, had given him occasion to raise comparisons between his former and
his

his present situation ; comparisons which could not possibly turn out otherwise than to the advantage of the former. He reproached himself, that in a fit of enthusiastic heroism, he had quitted for such frivolous reasons the most amiable of all women, on the mere accusation of so contemptible a man as *Hippias*, from which she might perhaps have justified herself completely, if he had given her the hearing. This action, which he at that time had thought so commendable, when he considered it as a glorious victory over the ignobler part of himself, as a great expiatory sacrifice which he made to offended virtue, now appeared to him ungrateful and base. He was grieved with the thought that he might have been happy in connecting his fortunes with her's ; and enthusiasm suffered the more in his opinion, when he considered at the same time by what chimerical representations and hopes, it had deprived him of his private happiness. But the thought,

thought, that by his mean behaviour he had obliged the beautiful *Danae* to despise, to hate him, and that she could never think on the tenderness he had inspired her with, otherwise than as an unfortunate weakness, the remembrance of which must necessarily load her with grief and regret—this idea was totally insupportable to him. *Danae*, however offended she might be, could not possibly detest him so much, as he abhorred himself in those hours, when these ideas overpowered his reason. But these hours at last passed over, and a painful sense of the present misfortune contributed not a little, to represent to him the causes and circumstances of his departure from *Smyrna*, in such a splenetic light. The happy alteration, which his situation in the most amiable family that perhaps ever existed, produced in his circumstances, necessarily changed also the colour of his imagination. Had he not quitted *Danae*, he would neither have recovered his
sister,

sister, nor have become personally acquainted with the wise *Archytas*. These consequences of his virtuous infidelity, made it impossible for him to wish that he had not been guilty of it; but they excited, instead of this, another wish, which in the situation he lived in at *Tarentum*, was very natural. The serene tranquillity, which in a short time was re-established in his mind, naturally inclined to mirth; the freedom from all occupations and cares; the enjoyment of all that the friendship of a heart full of sensibility can supply; the prospect of the happiness of his friend *Critolaus*, which seemed to increase every day in the possession of the lovely *Psyche*; the want of dissipation, by which the soul is prevented from concentrating itself in the sphere of it's most agreeable ideas and sensations; the natural consequences of this, that these ideas and sensations must of course become more lively;—all these circumstances concurred to renew that
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kind of disposition in him, which excited the tenderest recollection of the once greatly beloved *Danae*, and produced in him from time to time, a kind of soft voluptuous melancholy, in which his heart suffered itself to be carried back without resistance into those enchanting scenes of love and delight, which—for reasons we will leave to moralists to determine—had lost infinitely less of their influence by the revolution that had taken place in his soul, than the abstracted and mere intellectual objects of his former enthusiasm. Can we blame him for wishing in such hours to find the beautiful *Danae* innocent,—for wishing it so often and so ardently, that he at length persuaded himself she really was so?—Can we blame him if the impossibility of regaining a good, of which he had so credulously and in so base a manner deprived himself, should sometimes sink him into a melancholy, which imbittered the taste of his present happiness, and made
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the deeper impresson on his mind, as he could not resolve to communicate his affliction to those persons, to whom, except in this one point, he used to open the inmost recesses of his soul?—Where then is this preparative to lead us?—some of our penetrating readers will perhaps think:—we shall doubtless have *Danae* brought here by some officious storm, since the good *Psyche*, without our knowing how, by a true stroke of a magic wand, has appeared to us in the Gynæcium of the venerable *Archytas*.—“And why not?—as soon as we are assured how happy we can make our friend *Agathon* by this.”—But where then is the pleasure of surprize, which other writers usually procure to their readers with so much pains and art? It is neglected, gentlemen; and *Diderot* can tell you if ye please, why ye lose little or nothing by it. In the mean while we are glad to be reminded, that we owe our readers some account, how *Psyche*, whom we had left dref-

dress'd like a *Ganymede*, and in the hands of a pirate, should have happened to become the wife of *Critolaus*, and the sister of *Agathon*. A small extract from the account given to *Agathon* partly by his sister herself, partly by her nurse, (who had the misfortune to be rather more prolix in her narratives than we are) will be sufficient to satisfy their reasonable curiosity on this point.

A violent storm is a very unfortunate event for people who are in the middle of the open sea, or separated from a watery death merely by the thickness of a plank; but for one who writes the histories of heroes and heroines, it is almost one of the luckiest of all incidents, that can be thought of, to help him out of a difficulty. It was therefore a storm (and you have no reason to complain, gentlemen, for it is, as far as we know, the first in this history) which delivered the lovely *Psyche* out of the formidable power of an amorous pirate. The ship struck on the
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Italian coast, a few miles from *Capua*; and *Psyche*, protected by the Nereids or the Deities of love, was the only person in the ship who was safely conveyed to land on a plank by the Zephyrs. The Zephyrs alone would not perhaps have been sufficient for this purpose, but with the assistance of a few fishermen, who luckily happened to be near at hand, the matter admitted of no difficulty. This was all very fortunate, but it was nothing in comparison with what is to follow. One of the fishermen (without doubt the most compassionate) carried the disguised *Psyche*, who wanted much to dry herself, and to recover from the fatigue she had undergone, to his wife in his cottage. The fisherman's wife (a pretty plump woman of three or four and forty years of age) who looked as if her heart had not been insensible in her younger days, shewed uncommon compassion for the misfortune of so amiable a youth as *Psyche* appeared to her to be; she

she took as much care of him as possible, and could not satisfy her eyes with gazing at him. She seemed to recollect, she said, that she certainly had seen such a face before; and could scarce wait, till the beautiful stranger was in a condition, according to custom, to tell his story. But *Psyche* wanted rest; she was therefore put to-bed; and on this occasion, the fisherwoman, who was attentive to the most trifling circumstances, discovered, that the disguised youth was a most exquisitely beautiful young woman,—but yet not quite so handsome as she had found her in men's cloaths. It was natural to be at first rather dissatisfied with this metamorphosis; but this transient ill-humour was soon converted into the most lively and affectionate joy:—In short, it was discovered that the fisherwoman, *Clonarion*, was the nurse of *Psyche*, who by this name, imagined that she recollected her beloved nurse, as well as the other remembered her dearest nurse.

ling from the features of her face, from her resemblance to her mother, *Musarion*, and particularly from a little mole she had under her left breast. *Clonarion* had been the most faithful servant of our Heroine's mother, and after her death, the little *Psyche*, or *Philoclea*, as she was properly called, was committed to her care, for *Psyche* was only a fondling appellation which her nurse had given her out of tenderness; and the little *Philoclea*, as she had never heard herself called any thing but *Psyche* or *Psycharion*, afterwards gave it out as her real name. *Stratonicus* had given *Clonarion* a sufficient sum of money with the yet infant *Psyche*, and had ordered her to bring the child up in the neighbourhood of *Corinth*, as that was the most convenient place where he could visit her now and then incognito. The young *Psyche*, the joy and pride of her tender nurse, who loved her as her own child, grew so pretty that a more lovely girl could not be seen. The hopes of
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gain at last seduced some base people to steal her away privately, when she was about five or six years old, and sell her to the Priestess of *Delphos*. A necklace, to which was fastened a miniature picture of her mother, and which the young *Psyche* used always to wear, was bought with her, and served afterwards to confirm that she really was the daughter of *Stratonicus*. *Clonarion*, when she missed her *Psyche*, tore her hair; and after searching for her some time, every where, except where she really was, she could think of no better way, than to give out that the child was dead, in order to clear herself to her master, from the charge of culpable negligence. *Stratonicus* was the more easily imposed upon, as at that time he had been engaged in affairs, which had hindered him a long time from going to *Corinth*. In the interim, *Clonarion*, who was always wandering about from one place to another, met with a number of adventures, which ended at last in this, that

she became the wife of a fisherman in the neighbourhood of *Capua*, already rather advanced in years, in whose eyes she was at that time as beautiful at least, as *Thetis* or *Galatea*. She loved her dear nurse-child so tenderly, that she had given the name of *Psyche* to a daughter of her own, merely to keep her in perpetual remembrance. The death of this child, happening near about the same age at which *Psyche* had been stolen away, renewed her grief; and as from this circumstance the image of the tender *Psyche* was ever before her eyes, so she had the less trouble in recollecting her, notwithstanding fourteen or fifteen years must have produced some change in her features. Our Heroine therefore now increased the small family of the old fisherman, who changed his abode, and went into the neighbourhood of *Tarentum*, where, as they were totally unknown, she passed for his daughter. *Psyche* adapted herself to the low condition in which she must necessarily

cessarily live with her nurse, as well as if she had never known any better; and had nothing more at heart, than by industrious labour to lighten the burden of her maintenance. At last the young *Critolaus* happened accidentally to see our Heroine, who in her rustic, but neat dress, and adorned with fresh flowers, must have appeared to him, when he met her in a grove, rather as one of *Diana's* companions, than the daughter of a poor fisherman. *Critolaus* conceived the most ardent passion for her; and his love being as virtuous as it was tender, he soon gained the compassionate *Clonarion* over to his cause; and as *Psyche* then knew that *Agathon* was her brother, so there was no reason why she should be insensible to the affection of so amiable a young man. In reality *Critolaus* was in many respects a second *Agathon*; but the circumstances afforded so little hope of the possibility of a legitimate connection with him, that *Psyche* thought herself obliged

the more carefully to conceal what her heart felt in his favour, the more determined he was to sacrifice all other considerations to his affection. At length he had no other expedient but to discover the secret of his heart to the person, whose approbation he least expected to gain. All the eloquence of inspired love, would have had very little effect upon so wise a man as *Archytas*; but *Critolaus* related such extraordinary things of the understanding and virtue of his beloved, that his father at last began to attend to him. *Archytas* had never experienced the power of the Demon of Love, but he was humane, good, and superior to vulgar prejudices and designs. A beautiful and virtuous young woman was in his eyes a very noble creature, whose merit through the clouds of meanness and poverty shone only the more conspicuously. As soon as *Critolaus* perceived that his father began to hesitate, he ventured to disclose to him

him the secret of his beloved's birth, which *Clonarion*, without *Psyche*'s participation, had told him in confidence, hoping it might have some good effect. *Archytas*, to whom *Stratonicus* had formerly discovered his secret connection with *Musarion*, was not a little rejoiced at this incident; he wished nothing more than that the lady with whom his son had been so violently smitten, might prove the daughter of his dearest friend; but he would be certain that she really was so; and the mere testimony of a fisherwoman did not appear to him sufficient. He contrived to see *Psyche* and her supposed nurse; he thought that he discovered in the features of the former some traces of her father; and the conversation he had with her, strengthened the favourable impression, the sight of her had made upon him. At his desire her story was related to him with all the circumstances; and he found still less reason to doubt of the veracity of those things which his son, without the

least inquiry, had received as the most evident truth, on the bare report of the nurse. The necklace which *Psyche* must have left behind her in the hands of the Pythones, was the only thing wanting to convince him entirely. On this account he sent a person he could confide in to *Delphos*; and the priestess, when she found that a man of so great authority interested himself in the fate of her former slave, made no difficulty of delivering up the tokens of her descent. *Archytas* now thought he had a right to consider *Psyche* as the daughter of a friend, whose memory was dear to him, and he himself now had nothing nearer at heart than to transplant her into his family. She became therefore the wife of the happy *Critolaus*; and this connection naturally gave *Archytas* fresh motives for interesting himself in *Agathon's* deliverance so warmly and zealously, as we have before related.

C H A P. IV.

Something, which without a Spirit of Divination, may be foreseen.

A G A T H O N had begun to live much earlier than most men do, yet he was not near so far advanced in years as to retire totally from the world. But after having already twice undertaken a principal part on the theatre of public life, in which he had acquitted himself well enough for a young man, he thought he had a right to retreat into the circle of private life, as long as he had not any particular call to serve his country, or as long as it should not absolutely stand in need of him. The principles of the wise *Archytas* coincided exactly with his way of thinking on this head. A man of more than common capacity, said *Archytas*, may find sufficient employment in reforming his own life, and in endeavouring to attain per-

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fection. He is best qualified for his business when he has begun to acquire a knowledge of himself and of the world, by a series of considerable experience. While he thus labours for himself, he in fact labours for the world; because he is thereby so much the better enabled to be of use to his country, to his friends, and to mankind in general; and to concur towards promoting the universal good of the system, whether with more or less dignity, in a greater or a smaller circle, in a public, or in a less conspicuous manner.

Agathon, as soon as he became a citizen of *Tarentum*, employed himself agreeably to these maxims, principally in the mathematical sciences, in examining the powers and properties of natural things, and in astronomy. In short, he studied that part of speculative philosophy, which, with the assistance of the senses and careful reasoning, leads to a clear, though by no means a complete knowledge

knowledge of nature, and her majestically simple, wise and beneficent laws. To these sublime studies, in which the instructions of *Archytas* were of great service to him, he joined the reading of the best writers of all classes, particularly the historians, and the study of antiquity, which as well as verbal criticism, he considered as one of the most noble and useful, or one of the most insignificant speculations, according as it was pursued either in a philosophical, or merely in a mechanical manner. He frequently laid these severer studies aside, in order, as he said, to sport with the Muses; and the natural bent of his genius made this kind of intellectual amusement so agreeable to him, that he found it difficult to disengage himself from it again. Painting and Music, the sister arts to poetry, the sublime theory of which loses itself in the most mysterious depths of philosophy, also employed some of his time; and helped him to avoid too great

an uniformity in the occupations of his mind, and to prevent the pernicious consequences that might ensue from its being confined to one single species of objects.

THE frequent conversations he had with *Archytas*, contributed much and perhaps principally to restrain his mind from wandering in abstruse speculations upon metaphysical subjects. *Agathon*, who formerly, when his soul was all sensibility, suffered his judgment to be too easily surprized; now he began to reason coolly, found almost every thing doubtful. Every day lessened the number of human ideas and opinions, which would stand the test of a quiet, cool and accurate examination. The systems of dogmatical philosophers were gradually eclipsed, and dispelled by the rays of penetrating reason, as the chimeras, and magic beauties we sometimes think we see in a cloud of vapours on a summer's morning, are dissipated by the rising sun. The wise *Archytas*

thyas approved the modest scepticism of his friend; but while he brought him back from his too adventurous flight into the land of ideas, to those simple, and therefore more estimable truths that seem to be the guides, which the common Father of all Beings has set up to conduct us securely through the labyrinth of life; —he warned him against that total ambiguity of mind which occasions so much irresolution and debility of reason, and consequently becomes the source of so many injurious consequences to religion and virtue, and to the tranquillity and happiness of our lives, that the situation of the most enchanted enthusiast, is preferable to that of a philosopher, who from continual apprehensions of being mistaken, at length dares neither affirm nor deny any thing. In fact, reason in this instance is something like Doctor *Peter Rezio* of *Aguero*; it has so much to oppose to every thing our soul is nourished with, that she must at last as necessarily

cessarily languish through inanition, as the unfortunate governors of the island of *Barataria* did through the diet, to which they were condemned by the cursed prescription of their too scrupulous physician. The best way on such an occasion, is to extricate ourselves as *Sancho* did. Instinct, and the almost unerring sensation of what is right and good, which nature has imparted to all men, can best inform us what we are to trust to; and sooner or later, the men of the greatest genius must have recourse to this, if they would avoid the fate of the patriarch *Noah's* dove, of fluttering about on all sides, and finding no resting place.

Notwithstanding all these various occupations in which our Hero employed his leisure to his own advantage, he had still some hours to spare, which were devoted to friendship and sociable pleasures. — Too many hours indeed for his own tranquillity; for in these, a kind of tender melancholy which he could not get
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the better of, reduced his soul to that state of inchantment, we have already mentioned in the preceding chapter. In such a disposition of mind a man prefers living in the country, where he has an opportunity of giving way to his thoughts with less interruption, than amidst the duties and dissipations of a more sociable town life. *Agathon* therefore frequently retired to a seat, in the possession of his brother *Critolaus*, about six miles from *Tarentum*, where he sometimes diverted himself with hunting in his company. It happened once on this occasion, that they were surprized by a storm, at least as violent as that in which, by the contrivance of two Goddesses, *Aeneas* and *Dido* were driven together into the same cave.

BUT here no such hospitable cave presented itself to afford them shelter, and the worst was, that they had lost their servants, and knew not for a considerable time in what place they were. This is an accident which in itself has nothing
very

very extraordinary, but occasioned as we shall see one of the most fortunate adventures, that ever happened to our Hero. As soon as they got out of the wood, *Critolaus* recollected the country, but perceived at the same time, that they were some miles distant from home. The storm still continued to rage violently, and there was no place in which they could take shelter nearer, than a lonely country house, inhabited, for more than a year past, by a foreign lady of very singular character. It was conjectured from some circumstances, that she must be the widow of some man of rank and fortune, but no one had hitherto been able to find out her name and former residence, or discover what had induced her to change it, in order to live in a state of total sequestration from the world. Report said much of her beauty, yet nobody could boast of having seen her. The less people knew of her, the more they made her the subject of their conversation.

versation for a considerable time; but when they found she was resolutely determined not to trouble herself about what they said, they no longer mentioned her, and left it to time to explain the mysterious character of this person, and the reasons of her singular method of living. Perhaps, said *Critolaus*, this lady is a second *Artemisia*, who chuses to bury herself alive in this solitude, in order to abandon herself to her grief without interruption. I have long been desirous of seeing her; this storm will I hope give us the opportunity: she cannot refuse us shelter in her house; and when we have once gained admittance, we shall find some means or other of seeing her; even though we should be the first persons in this neighbourhood, who may have been indulged in that privilege.

WE can readily imagine, that *Agathon*, however indifferent he might be to the ladies, since the time of his separation from *Danae*, must yet have some curiosity

riosity to be acquainted with so extraordinary a person. They arrived at the outward door of a house, which resembled rather an enchanted castle, than a Villa in the Ionian or Corinthian taste. The badness of the weather, the earnestness of their request, and perhaps their good appearance gained them admission. Some old slaves conducted them into a saloon, where they could not avoid accepting all the little services that were offered them in the most friendly manner, and which their situation required. The figure of these strangers seemed to throw the people of the house into astonishment, and gave them reason to think that they must be persons of distinction: but *Agathon*, whose attention was presently engaged by some pictures which ornamented the saloon, did not perceive that he was observed with still greater attention by a female slave. This slave appeared like a person who knew not whether she should believe her eyes or not; and

and *Critolaus*, as he afterwards declared, thought at first that her surprize was an effect of our Hero's beauty. After gazing upon him a few minutes with eager eyes, she hastily quitted the saloon. She ran so eagerly up to her mistress's chamber, that she was quite out of breath. "And who do you think, Madam, said she panting, is below in the saloon? Has not your heart already told you? *Diana* be propitious to me! What an incident is this! Who would have dreamt it? I am so astonished, I know not where I am!" —"Upon my word I believe you are not rightly in your senses, said the lady rather surprized; who is then below in the saloon?"—"O! by the Goddesses! I scarcely could believe my own eyes;—but yet I knew him again the moment I saw him, though he is grown rather stouter: nothing is more certain—it is he, it is he!"—"Torment me no longer, cried the lady, seized with still greater astonishment, with thy mysterious jargon; tell me

me then trifler, who is it?"—"But can you not yet guess, Madam, who it is?—I tell you, that *Agathon* is below in the saloon, yes *Agathon*, nothing is more certain:—It is either he, or his ghost, one or the other indisputably. His mother could not know him better than I did, the moment he threw off the cloak in which he was at first wrapped up."—This good girl would still have run on in the same strain, for her heart overflowed with joy, if she had not quickly perceived, that her mistress had fainted, and was fallen back on the sofa. It was with some difficulty she could bring her to herself again; at length the lady recovered, but only to be displeased with herself, for having so much sensibility. "You frighten me, Madam, said the slave, if you faint away merely at the mention of his name, what will become of you when you see him?—Shall I go and bring him up immediately?"—"Bring him up?" replied the lady, no truly; I will not see him!"—"You will

not.

not see him, Madam ? What a thought ! But you cannot be in earnest ! O ! if you did but see him,—he is so handsome,—handfomer I think than ever ; my eyes could have devoured him ; you must see him, Madam,—It would indeed be inexcusable in you, to let him go away without seeing you ; —wherefore have you then” —“Hold your tongue, say no more, cried the lady, leave me,—but do not think of going down again into the saloon. If it is he, I do not chuse he should recollect you ; for I hope you have not yet betrayed me.” —“No, Madam, replied the confidant ; he has not yet noticed me, for he was totally taken up with considering the pictures, and I thought I heard him sigh once or twice ; probably” —“Thou art crazy, interrupted the lady, leave me,—I will not see him, neither shall he know in whose house he is ; if you discover it to him, you have lost a friend.” —The slave retired in hopes
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that her mistress would think better of it, and the beautiful *Danae* was left alone.

A detail of all that passed in her mind, would fill up some sheets, though it took up less than six minutes.—What a contest!—What a tumult of contrary emotions! Till this moment she had loved him so tenderly—and now it seemed to her as if she felt that she hated him.—She dreaded to see him,—and yet impatiently wished it. What would she have given an hour before to see this *Agathon*, who, however ungrateful, however inconstant, still reigned over her whole soul,—the loss of whom had made all the advantages of her former situation, her residence at *Smyrna*, her friends, her riches insupportable to her,—whose image, with all the delightful recollections of her former happiness, was the only good, the only pleasure, she was susceptible of. But now, when she knew that it was in her power to see him again, all her pride was at once awakened, and in some moments seemed

seemed to make it impossible for her to forgive him. If in the next moment love reassumed its dominion, the apprehension of finding him indifferent instantly reduced her to the same dilemma. To all these may be added another consideration, which perhaps might appear too refined in the beautiful *Danae*, if we did not declare in her justification, that our Hero's flight, the discovery of the causes which compelled him to so violent a resolution, the thought, that her own errors had made her contemptible in the eyes of the only man she had ever loved,—that all these things I say, had produced a total alteration in her way of thinking, an alteration which had been brought about by her conversing with *Agathon*, and by that union of souls, of which we have already spoken in the fifth book. *Danae* did not suffer herself to be discouraged by the reproaches she had to make herself, and which probably she might deserve merely on account of the peculiarity

liarity of circumstances, from the noble resolution of devoting herself to virtue; a resolution, which in that age was in itself considered as meritorious. - In reality, a kind of amorous despair had the greatest share in the extraordinary step she had taken, of voluntarily quitting a world in which she was adored, for a solitude, where the liberty of entertaining herself with her own ideas, was the only satisfaction that could compensate the loss of all that she sacrificed. But it belonged only to a great soul, a soul formed for virtue, to be capable of such despair in the splendid circumstances in which she lived, and to persist in a resolution, which must soon have overpowered a weak mind. Had *Danae* been voluptuously inclined, she might have found opportunities enough at *Smyrna* and every where else, of consoling herself for the loss of her lover. But her love, as we may perhaps still remember, was of a more noble kind, and so nearly allied to
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the love of virtue itself, that we have reason to imagine, from the total privacy in which our Heroine lived, that the first had now entirely lost itself in the latter; that her sincere love of virtue, and the consciousness of the involuntary weakness of her heart for the too amiable *Agathon*, were good reasons why she should hesitate to expose herself to the danger of being affected by a too probable return of her former sentiments. This was a thought which she might have, without entertaining too high an opinion of her charms; and which from the self-distrust always accompanying real virtue, must have no inconsiderable degree of weight. Such was the contest between love, pride and virtue in her irresolute heart, for and against the desire of seeing *Agathon*.—What was the effect we may readily imagine. Love could not be love, if it did not contrive to gain over pride and virtue to its side. It inspired her pride with the desire of seeing how *Agathon* would

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behave,

behave, when he should so suddenly and unexpectedly behold the once much beloved, and cruelly injured *Danae*; and encouraged her virtue to a confidence that she should be able to bear, without being too violently agitated, the transports he might possibly experience on this occasion. In short, the consequence of this internal conflict was, that she had just resolved to call in her confidant (the only person she had taken with her at her departure from *Smyrna*) that she might give her the necessary orders; when the slave herself came in, and told her lady, that the two strangers had sent one of the slaves who waited upon them, requesting in a very pressing manner the permission of being admitted to the mistress of the house.—A fresh cause of irresolution, which no man who knows the nature of a female heart will wonder at. In reality *Danae's* heart beat so violently at this instant, that she found it
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necessary to compose herself, before she could venture to undergo so severe a trial.

IN the mean time, while this beautiful lady is settling with herself what she shall resolve upon, and how she shall behave in an interview so much desired, and so much dreaded, let us return for a moment to our Hero in the saloon. The more *Agathon* considered the pictures which hung round the walls, the more was he persuaded that he had seen them in *Danae's* country house at *Smyrna*. But so little could he conceive how they should have got here from the place in which he had seen them two years before, that he thought it rather more probable he should be deceived by his imagination. The same masters might perhaps have wrought off several copies of their pieces. But when he fixed his eyes a second time upon one picture, which represented the Goddess *Diana*, as she was viewing with eyes of love the sleeping *Endymion*;—he was so firmly persuaded

that it was the same, before which he had so frequently stood for a quarter of an hour together in admiring extasy, in a summer-house of *Danae's* at *Smyrna*, that it was impossible for him to resist conviction. The confusion which this threw him into, is not to be described.—Had *Danae*,—but how could that be possible?—And yet all the particulars which *Critolaus* had told him of the lady of the house, seemed to confirm the ideas that arose in his mind, and which he scarce dared to indulge. The beautiful *Danae* might have been satisfied, if she had known what was passing in his heart. He could not have been seized with greater dread at coming into the presence of an injured Goddess, than at the thoughts of appearing before this *Danae*, whom for a considerable time past he had been accustomed to represent to himself as innocent, as she seemed contemptible and odious to him, at the time that he quitted her. But the desire of seeing her,
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at length banished all other emotions with which his heart was agitated. His anxiety was so visible, that *Critolaus* could not but observe it. *Agathon* would have done better to disclose the cause of it to him; but instead of doing this, he had recourse to the common excuse of not being well. Notwithstanding this he expressed so impatient a desire of seeing the lady of the house, that *Critolaus* began to conjecture from what he observed of his behaviour, that there must be some mystery in this business, the unfolding of which he eagerly expected. In the mean time, the slave whom they had sent with the message to his mistress, returned with the answer, that he had orders to conduct them into her chamber. And here it is, that we are more than ever tempted to wish, that this book should be read by none but those who believe that there are such things as great souls. The situation in which we shall see our Hero in a few minutes, is perhaps one of the most

delicate that can be experienced in life. If we had here to do with such imaginary characters as those which have been feigned by the female writer of the secret history of *Burgundy*, and of the Queen of *Navarre*, we should scarcely have been less embarrassed than *Agathon* himself, when with a throbbing heart and panting breast, he followed the slave who introduced him into the chamber of an unknown lady, whom with equal agitation he wished and dreaded, might be *Danae*. But as *Agathon* and *Danae* are as much historical characters, as *Brutus*, *Portia*, and a hundred others, whose existence has not been the less certain, because they have not thought, or acted exactly as common people do: we are not very anxious how this *Agathon* and this *Danae* might or would have acted according to the moral ideas of any persons, who may judge well or ill of this work, if this *Agathon* and this *Danae* had not been what our Hero and Heroine were. The
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right of judging cannot and ought not to be contested with any man; our duty is to relate, not to invent, and we are not to be blamed, if *Agathon* has not behaved himself wisely and heroically enough on this occasion, to deserve the esteem of rigid moral critics; or if *Danae* has not maintained the prerogative of female pride, so well as many others, who thank heaven that they are no *Danaes*, would have done in her place.

THE beautiful *Danae* seated on her sofa, waited for the visit she was going to receive, with as much fortitude as a female soul, and one, which at the same time is as tender and sensible as such a soul can be, could possibly be capable of.—But are there such things as female souls?—O, Sir! I told you that the latter part of this chapter was not written for any one who can ask such a question.—You may perhaps doubt whether women have any souls; but if they have souls, they are female souls; for Heaven defend us

from those Penthefileas, and Amazons, in whom nothing is female, but their form.—We will not however contend upon this subject at present. *Danae* therefore waited for the sight of her fugitive with tolerable firmness; but as to what passed in her heart, such of our tender readers as are capable of putting themselves in her situation, must read it in their own. She knew that *Agathon* had a companion, and this consideration was of use to her; but *Agathon* experienced very little relief from it. The door of the anti-chamber was opened by the female slave;—he immediately recollected the confidant of his beloved, and therefore could no longer doubt that the lady he was to see in a few moments, was *Danae*. He summoned all his fortitude, while with trembling faltering steps he followed his friend, *Critolaus*.—He saw her, would have advanced towards her, but could not; he fixed his eyes upon her, and fell back, overpowered with excess

excess of sensibility, into the arms of his friend. The beauteous *Danae* at once forgot all the great resolutions of coolness and reserve she had taken such pains to make. She ran to him with tender consternation, took him in her arms, and gave a free course to all her tenderness, without ever considering that there was a third person by, who must unavoidably be astonished at all he heard and saw. But the goodness of his heart, and the sympathy, which in a few minutes makes great souls acquainted with each other, inspired him with the same kind of behaviour, in a situation for which he was so little prepared, that a long intimacy with her would have produced. He led his friend to the sofa, on which *Danae* threw herself down near him, and as he was now sufficiently let into the secret to perceive, that he could be of no farther use, he unobservedly slipped away to a sufficient distance, to relieve our lovers from the

constraint of a reserve, which in such moments is a greater evil, than people who want sensibility can suppose. *Agathon*, by the side of the tenderly affected *Danae*, and incircled with one of her beautiful arms, gradually recovered the power of breathing; his face reposed on her bosom, and the tears, which trickled down upon her, were the first signs that convinced her of his returning affection. Her first thought was to disengage herself from him; but her heart would not suffer her to do it; it told her what was passing in his, and she had not the courage to deprive him of a consolation, which he seemed, and in reality did stand so much in need of. But in a few minutes, he reproached himself, as being unworthy of such excessive goodness.—He threw himself at her feet, embraced her knees with a sensibility, which words cannot describe; he endeavoured to raise his eyes up to her, and being not able to support her look, sank down,
his

his countenance bathed in tears, upon her lap. *Danae* could now no longer doubt of her being beloved, and it was with great difficulty she restrained the transports into which she was thrown by this assurance; but, it was necessary to put an end to this too tender scene. *Agathon* could not yet speak,—and what indeed could he have said?—“*Agathon*, I am satisfied,” said she in a tone of voice, which involuntarily discovered what trouble she had to check her tears;—“I am satisfied;—you recover a friend,—and I hope you will hereafter find her less unworthy of your esteem.—No excuses, my friend, (for *Agathon* attempted to say something that looked like an excuse, and in the violent emotions he was in, he would have found it difficult to make a proper one)—you shall hear no reproaches from me,—we will think no more on what is past; but in order to enjoy more completely the happiness of so unexpected a meeting.”—

“Generous,

“Generous, divine *Danae*!” exclaimed *Agathon*, in a transport of gratitude and love—
“No epithets, *Agathon*, interrupted *Danae*, no enthusiasm! Thou art too much agitated; compose thyself—we shall have time to give each other an account of what has happened to us since the last time we met.—Allow me to enjoy uninterruptedly the pleasure of having found thee again; it is the only satisfaction I have experienced for these two years.”

WITH these words (and indeed she would have kept the last to herself, if it had been possible for her to be mistress over her own heart) she arose, approached *Critolaus*, and gave the more than ever enchanted *Agathon* time to resume a calmer disposition of mind.

Cætera intus agentur.—Our fair readers have already seen enough, to represent to themselves what the consequences of so tender a scene must be. *Danae* and *Critolaus* were soon good friends. This young man confessed, that his *Psyche* ex-
cepted,

cepted, he had seen nothing more perfect than *Danae*; and *Danae* discovered with much satisfaction, that *Critolaus* was the husband of the beautiful *Psyche*, and *Psyche* the recovered sister of *Agathon*. She had not much trouble to persuade her guests to pass the night in her house; the blame therefore would have lain upon our lovers, if they had not found an opportunity of conversing privately, and explaining their sentiments to each other. The charming *Danae* told her friend, that on her return to *Smyrna*, she soon discovered the treachery of *Hippias*, and the cause of *Agathon's* sudden disappearance. She did not conceal from him, that the pain of losing him, had forced her to take the strange resolution of renouncing the world, and of punishing herself in a distant solitude, for the foibles and failings of her past life. To this she added, that she hoped, if once she should have the opportunity to give him an entirely sincere and circumstantial history

tory of her heart, to the time when his conversation, and the tenderness she had experienced for him alone the first time in her life, had given her soul a kind of new existence,—that she hoped he would then find reasons, if not entirely to justify, yet to pity rather than condemn her. The fear of giving her reason to think that she had forfeited any of his esteem, on account of what had before passed between them, obliged our Hero for a considerable time to conceal the vivacity of his sentiments. *Danae* however became acquainted with the family of *Archytas*: whoever saw her must necessarily love her; and the better she was known, the more did she rise in their esteem. Besides this, it was one of her qualifications to be able to accommodate herself very easily and in the best manner to all persons, situations and ways of living. How could it therefore be otherwise, than that in a short time she should be connected by the tenderest friendship to this worthy family?

ly? The wife *Archytas* himself was fond of her company, and she took a delight in assisting to alleviate, by the sprightliness of her conversation, the inconveniences of old age, in a man of such uncommon merit. But nothing could equal the affection with which *Psyche* and *Danae* inspired each other. Never perhaps did so tender and perfect a friendship take place between two females, so well fitted to become rivals. We may imagine that *Agathon* lost nothing by this. He saw the beautiful *Danae* every day, and had all the privileges of a brother with her—but how could it have been possible, he should for ever have been satisfied with this?—There were moments, when intoxicated with the recollection of his former felicity, he wished to exert the privileges of a favoured lover. But *Danae* was so much strengthened in her new way of thinking, by a familiar intercourse with the virtuous persons she lived with at present, that the tenderest solicitations of love could not triumph over

her. In this respect she would no longer be *Danae* for him. That is improbable, will the connoisseurs say; improbable I grant, yet still possible. In a word, *Danae* shewed by her example, that this was really possible to a *Danae*; and *Agathon* experienced it to such a degree, that *Psyche* at last began to pity him. She knew the secret history of her friend; *Danae* had been candid enough to give her a faithful account of it. We may easily conceive the difficulties that opposed themselves to the felicity of these lovers, who seemed so entirely made for each other. But were they of consequence enough to make them unhappy? Had he not the example of the great *Pericles* before him? Did not *Danae* in all respects deserve the fate of *Aspasia*?—It would be an easy matter for us to explain this miraculous affair to our readers, but we leave it to them to conjecture what he did—or to determine what he ought to have done.

C H A P.

C H A P T E R V.

A Farewell.

AND now since in this last book we think we have done every thing in favour of our Hero, that the most affectionate friends he may have gained, (and we hope he has found some) could ever wish for his advantage:—Since he is now happier perhaps than ever mortal was—or at least that he has it in his power to be happy,—we have nothing more to do, than to thank our readers of both sexes, who may have had patience enough to read as far as this page—and to assure them, that we shall be very well satisfied, if they have taken pleasure enough in this history to read it through—and still more so, if they are become wiser or better by it. But this is their own business. The editor of the history flatters himself at least (for who does not flatter himself?) that he has furnished them
with

with frequent opportunities both of pleasure and improvement. If the success does not answer his expectations, he will console himself with reflecting on the fate of so many thousand measures and attempts which are daily frustrated, and will wrap himself up with *Horace*, in the integrity of his intentions.

HE cannot however avoid discovering in confidence to his friends, that the Greek manuscript which he has in his hands, enables him to give some supplements or additions to the history of *Agathon*, which may not perhaps be unworthy of their attention. It is not impossible for instance, that they may be desirous of being more accurately acquainted with the system of the wise *Archytas*, or of knowing what *Agathon's* opinion might be, when he was fifty years old, upon every thing in heaven or on earth which deserves to be an object of our inquiries, our thoughts, our inclinations, our wishes, or reveries. Perhaps also it might not be
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disagreeable to them, to read the history of *Danae* circumstantially detailed, as she had had the courage to relate it to *Agathon* at a time when he no longer thought so enthusiastically, and therefore more reasonably—We could have satisfied the desire of our friends in all these particulars, if we had previously known that they had such a desire—and had any reasons to hope that these additions would have been of half as much service to the public, as the French author of the treatise on Nightingales, mentioned by *Helvetius*, thinks he has been of to mankind by his book.

T H E E N D.

MONTADA

